

**MEDIAEVAL INDIA
UNDER MUSLIM KINGS**

VOLUME II

THE GHAZNAWIDS

MEDIAEVAL INDIA UNDER MUSLIM KINGS

VOLUME II पुस्तक १२४

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GHAZNAWIDS

By

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"*Some Cultural Aspects of Muslim*

Rule in India," "*The Mughal*

Empire from Babar to

Aurangzeb,"

etc

FIRST EDITION 1940

PESHAWAR CITY

(INDIA)

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KISSA KHANI

Published by S
Khudadad St

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Printed at The Empire (Elec) Press, Govt Printers,
Sadar Road, Peshawar (N W F P)

DEDICATED

WITH PROFOUND LOVE

AND RESPECT

TO

SIR SHAFAT AHMAD KHAN, Kt.,

M A, LITT D, F R HIS SOC, ETC,

HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY,

UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD, A VETERAN

HISTORIAN WHOSE ACTIVE INTEREST IN

THE CAUSE OF INDIAN HISTORY HAS

LED TO THE RISE AND GROWTH OF THE

MODERN SCHOOL OF INDIAN HISTORY

AND THE

INDIAN HISTORY

CONGRESS.

PREFACE

"Among the finest products of the literary activity of the Indian Muhammadans has been their historical literature" said the late Sir Thomas Arnold, and there is no doubt that history was a subject in which the Musalmāns excelled and which they could legitimately claim as their own. The products of their pen are indeed marvels of mediæval history. The evidence contained in the huge mass of historical literature that has come down to us, if diligently tapped and carefully sifted, would have enabled modern Muslim scholars of India to bring out a complete and comprehensive history of Indo-Muslim Rule. But the subject has been woefully neglected by them, so much so that there are very few books on the Muslim Period of Indian history written by modern Muslim writers. It is this neglect, more than anything else, that is responsible for the growing bulk of anti-Islāmic literature and the ever-increasing circulation of wild notions about Islām and Muslim Rule in India. History books, written with ulterior motives, for personal gains, etc., and saturated through and through with extraneous influences, positively hostile to Islāmic culture, are taught in our schools and colleges, and the inevitable result is that on the one hand the sons of Islām have begun to feel ashamed of the acts of their ancestors and on the other hand the gulf between the major communities of India—Hindūs and Muslims—has been considerably widened. In short, misrepresentation of Islām and Muslim Rule in India has gone afar, and no organized literary effort has so far been launched to counteract the anti-Islāmic propaganda. Best brains being busy elsewhere, I took it upon myself to rewrite the history of Muslim Rule in India on what I believe to be correct lines. The warm welcome which greeted my published works led me to undertake the onerous task notwithstanding the numerous difficulties that confronted me at every stage—a task which, I dare say, could be more aptly and advantageously undertaken and accomplished by a company of competent scholars under the patronage of such promi-

ne it patrons of literature as the Muslim Princes of Indian States

For the preparation of this volume I have consulted a large number of standard works, mediæval as well as modern, and availed myself of the latest researches on the period covered by this volume. Among many other works, I have made use of Dr M Nāzım's scholarly monograph on *Ulmūd of Ghazna*, embodying minute researches on the life and times of that much-maligned monarch, and of Professor S H Hodīvālā's *Studies in Indo-Muslim History* throwing a flood of light on a number of obscure names and passages in the original MSS, though I have not accepted their conclusions unreservedly. My grateful acknowledgments are due to both these all those scholars whose monumental works I have drawn upon for information. In the presentation of facts I have exercised the utmost care and tried to make sure that nothing important is omitted. In describing the character of Muslim Kings and other individuals of eminence and assessing their achievements, I have been scrupulously careful. While giving them credit for the constructive work done by them, I have constantly kept before me the educative value of history and hence pointed out their mistakes and criticised their acts and administrations without any hesitation. With all my solicitude, I must point out, there are books to which I have had no access and hence the volume in hand may not be as exhaustive as I intended it to be. Should it be found to have filled the long-felt want to some appreciable extent, I shall deem myself amply rewarded. Lest the work that I have undertaken should suffer if continued by me unaided and alone amidst a number of difficulties, I beg to invite the constructive criticism of conscientious scholars and shall feel grateful to them if they co-operate with me to enhance the usefulness of the work. It will be a real service to the cause of Indian history.

Peshawar City,
10th May, 1940.

S M. JAFFAR

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ABBREVIATIONS

(These abbreviations are used only in respect of works which have been frequently cited in this volume. Works rarely referred to are excluded from this list, for their names and those of their authors are given in full in the foot-notes at their proper places)

| | |
|-------------|--|
| A A. | <i>Al-Mukhtasar fi Akhbār-il-Bashar</i> (Cairo edition), by Abul Fida |
| A. G. I. | <i>Ancient Geography of India</i> , by A. Cunningham |
| A S. I. | <i>Archæological Survey of India</i> . (Annual Reports) |
| B. I. S. | <i>Bibliotheca Indica Series of R A S B</i> |
| B M. | British Museum |
| C. H. I. | <i>Cambridge History of India, The</i> , Volume III, edited by Sir W Haig. |
| C. G. K. | <i>Coins of Ghazni Kings</i> , by E. Thomas |
| C. M. | <i>Chahār Maqāla</i> , by Nizāmī-al-'Arūzī al Samarqandī, edited by Maulvī Ghulām Muhammad Abūharī |
| C O C. | <i>Collection of Oriental Coins</i> in B M. |
| E. B. | <i>Encyclopædia Britannica, The</i> |
| En of Is. | <i>Encyclopædia of Islām</i> , edited by T. Houtsma and others |
| E & D. | Elliot and Dowson's <i>History of India as told by its own historians</i> |
| E M. I. | <i>Education in Muslim India</i> , by S M Jaffar |
| G D A. M. I | <i>Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediæval India</i> , by N. L. Dey |
| G. I | <i>Gates of India, The</i> , by Sir J. Holdich. |
| G. M S | <i>Gibb Memorial Series</i> |
| H. I. | <i>History of India, The</i> , by M. Elphinstone |

- H I E A* *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, by J Fergusson
- I A* *Indian Antiquary, The*.
- I G. I.* *Imperial Gazetteer of India, The*
- I K* Ibn Khaldūn's *Kitāb-ul- Ibār* translated into Urdu by Maulvī Hakīm Ahmad Hussain
- J. H* *Jawāmi-ul-Hikāyat*, by Awfī
- J R A S* *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*
- J A S B* *Journal of the (Royal) Asiatic Society of Bengal*
- J. T.* *Jāmi-ut-Tawārikh*, by Rashīd-ud-Dīn
- K. T.* *al-Kāmil fit-Tawārikh*, by Allāmā Ibn-ul-Asīr, edited by Tornberg
- L E C* *Lands of the Eastern Caliphate, The*, by G Le Strange
- L H P.* *Literary History of Persia, The*, by E G Browne
- M. F.* *Mahmūd wa Firdausī*, by Qāzī 'Abdus-Samad
- M. G* *Mahmūd of Ghazna, The Life and Times of Sultān*, by M Nāzim
- M. I* *Mediæval India, The History of*, by Ishwari Prasad
- Mihrān* *The Mihrān of Sind and its Tributaries*, by H. G Raverty in *J. A. S. B*
- M. Z.* *Murūj-uz-Zahāb*, by Abul Hasan 'Alī bin Hussain al-Mas'ūdī, translated into English by A Sprenger
- N K P.* Newal Kishor Press (Lucknow)
- O H I* *Oxford History of India, The*, by V. A. Smith.
- P P. M T.* *Politics in Pre-Mughal Times*, by Ishwara Topa
- R. S.* *Rauzat-us-Safā*, by Mīr Khwānd (N.K.P).

| | |
|----------------|--|
| S. A | <i>Shir-ul-'Asnān</i> , by Allāma Shihab No'mānī. |
| Sachau | E. C. Sachau's translation of Alberūnī's <i>Tahqīq al-Hind</i> , under the title 'Alberūnī's India'. |
| S A M. A | <i>Some Aspects of Muslim Administration</i> by R. P. Tripathi. |
| S C A. M. R. I | <i>Some Cultural Aspects of Muslim Rule in India</i> , by S. M. Jaffar. |
| S I M. H. | <i>Studies in Indo-Muslim History</i> , by S. H. Hodivala. |
| S M G | <i>Sultān Mahmūd of Ghaznī</i> , by M. Habīb |
| S N | <i>Siyāsat-Nāmah</i> , by Nizām-ul-Mulk, edited by Schefer. |
| S P L | <i>Studies in Persian Literature</i> , by Hādī Hasan. |
| T A | <i>Tabqāt-i-Akbarī</i> , by Nizām-ud-Dīn Ahmad (N. K. P.). |
| T B | <i>Tārīkh-i-Baihaqī</i> , by Abul Fazl Baihaqī. |
| T F | <i>Tārīkh-i-Ferishta (Gulshan-i-Ibrāhīmī)</i> , by Abul Qāsim Ferishta. (N. K. P.). |
| T G | <i>Tārīkh-i-Guzidāh</i> , by Hamdullah Mastaufī (G. M. S.). |
| T H. | <i>Tārīkh-i-Hindūstān</i> , by Shams-ul-Ulamā Dr. Muhammad Zakāullah Khān. |
| T M. | <i>Tārīkh-i-Mas'ūdī</i> , by Abul Fazl Muhammad Hussain al-Baihaqī, edited by Morley. |
| T N | <i>Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri</i> , by Minhāj-us-Sirāj Juz-jānī (B. I. S.). |
| T S. | <i>Tazkarat-ush-Shu'arā</i> , by Amīr Daulat Shāh Samarqandī. |
| T Y | <i>Tārīkh-i-Yamīnī (Kitāb-ul-Yamīnī)</i> , by Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Utbī. |
| Z. A. | <i>Ziyā-ul-Akhbār</i> , by 'Abdul Haī bin Az-Zuhāk bin Mahmūd al Gardīzī, edited by M. Nāzim. |

THE EARLY GHAZNAWIDS

FROM ALPTIGIN TO SUBUKTIGIN

Introductory The Arabs were the first Muslim conquerors of India; but they did not carry their conquests far beyond the Indus. Even in Sind their rule did not endure long and they left no lasting legacy behind except that a large part of the population of that place became Muslim in faith. After a period of about two centuries that elapsed after the Arab occupation of Sind, India presented a scene of confusion. A mere geographical expression or a conglomeration of small states, without a paramount power at the centre, showing no signs of national unity — she was rent up by dynastic jealousies and internecine warfare, so much so that even in the event of a common danger the people would not offer a united front. It was on this India that the avalanche of Turkish invasions from the North-West broke and eventually changed the course of her history. After the conquest of the country, the Muslim rulers of India set themselves sedulously to the task of establishing law and order and building up on that foundation an empire capable of protecting the people and opening up new avenues for the advance of their intellect. In the train of Muslim warriors and war-lords came Muslim

saints and scholars, poets and philosophers, who permeated the ranks of Indian society and tried to give India that cultural unity without which political solidarity could not be achieved

When the 'Abbāsīd Khilāfat began to decline in power and prestige, the governors of the far-flung provinces declared their independence. One of them, Ismā'īl by name, Sāmānīd by tribe and Tartar by origin, seized upon Khurāsān, Transoxiana and Afghānistān in 872 A. C. and fixed his capital at Bukhārā, where he founded the Sāmānīd Dynasty, which remained in the saddle for more than a century. His son and successor, Ahmad, had a Turkish slave, named Alptigīn, whom he enrolled in his body-guard. Manumitted by the next king, Nasr *bin** Ahmad, and entrusted with the command of some troops by his successor, Nūh *bin* Nasr, Alptigīn rose from that rank to one of *Hāyib-ul-Hujjāb* and acquired immense power and influence after his victory over Bakr *bin* Malik, the commander of the troops of Khurāsān, in 956 A. C. Under the patronage of his youthful master, 'Abdul-Malik, he rose to be the governor of Khurāsān by dint of his ability and industry. On the death of 'Abdul Malik when he was consulted about the appointment of his successor, he voted against Mansūr, the brother of the deceased king. Mansūr having been elected by other *Amīrs*, the life of Alptigīn was in danger, and

* *Bin*, an Arabic word, means 'son of.'

had he not displayed extraordinary skill and courage in extricating himself from the web of intrigue which his enemies had woven around him, his fate would have been sealed. He tried to put his plans into practice but the prudence of the Amīr prevented him from doing so. Deprived of the aid of Abū Mansūr, who had made common cause with him after his expulsion from Khurāsān but was now restored to his previous post, and scenting treachery in his own camp, he decided to seek his fortune elsewhere. Abandoning the proposed conquest of Bukhārā, he left Khurāsān with as many as 3,000 faithful followers and proceeded towards Balkh. On the way he was attacked by an army sent by the Sāmānid King under the command of Ash'as bin Muhammad, but he defeated it in a battle near the Khulam Pass despite its numerical strength (12,000). From Balkh he marched towards Ghaznīn and conquered it from Abū Bakr Lawīk and set up an independent kingdom there in direct defiance of Mansūr's authority. This act of his added injury to insult and Mansūr made up his mind to wreak terrible vengeance on him. He sent an army of 20,000 strong against him under the command of Abū Ja'far, but he inflicted a sharp defeat on it and compelled it to beat a disgraceful retreat. After two successive reverses, Mansūr regarded prudence as a better part of valour and wished to make the best of a bad bargain. He brought about a reconciliation between himself and his recalcitrant officer by confirming him in the

government of the territories conquered by him. The places which next felt the force of Alptigin's arms were Bust and a part of the kingdom of Kābul, which were attacked and occupied. After that he led some expeditions against the neighbouring chiefs, defeated the Afghāns of the Khyber Pass and Peshāwar valley and established his authority there. But for the fact that he had a very brief reign, he would have considerably extended the area of his kingdom. He passed away in September, 963 A. C. after a successful reign of about eight months*. He was a just, wise and vigorous ruler.

Alptigin was succeeded by his son, Abū Is-hāq, but not before he had defeated Abū 'Alī son of Abū Bakr Lawīk, who had driven him out. On his death three distinguished generals of the late king occupied the throne of Ghaznīn one after the other. The first was Bilkātigīn who is said to have been a very pious, brave and justice-loving man. The second was Pīrī (Pīritigīn) who turned out to be 'a great villain'. The reign of this ruler is remarkable for the first clash between Muslims and Hindūs in the vicinity of Ghaznīn. It is narrated that the disaffected people of Ghaznīn, who worked for his overthrow and plotted for his deposition, requested Abū 'Alī Lawīk to make common cause with the Shāh of Kābul and put an end to the rule of

* See p. 5, note, and *M. G.*, 24—27 and 175—76

Pirītigin the tyrant The allies marched against Ghaznīn from their respective places Subuktigin, the third general of Alptigin and a seasoned soldier, fell upon Abū 'Alī Lawīk with a body of 500 Turks and inflicted a sharp defeat and heavy losses on him The Hindūs, who were advancing under the son of their Shāh (king of Kābul) for seizing Ghaznīn, were successfully repulsed and routed by Pirītigin It has been correctly remarked by Sir W Haig that it was "the first conflict in this region between Hindūs and Muslims, the former being the aggressors" * Pirītigin was deposed on account of his unpopularity and then the third general, viz, Subuktigin, was raised to the throne †

* C H. I, m, 11

† Some historians have only ignored while others have altogether denied the existence of Bilkatigin and Pirītigin (Pirī) which is proved by documentary as well as numismatic evidence. The regnal dates of these two kings as well as of their predecessor and successor are different in different accounts. This has led to a heated controversy among modern scholars who have advanced various arguments in support of their respective theories Raverty wrote a fairly long note on the subject and maintained that Alptigin ruled for *eight years* and died in 352 A. H., that his son Is-hāq, who succeeded him, remained in power till 355 A. H., that Bilkatigin, who succeeded, Is-hāq, ruled for eight years and died in 362 A. H., and that Pirī (Pirītigin) came next and occupied the throne till 367 A. H., when he was defeated and deposed by Subuktigin (*Vide* Raverty's translation of T N, 71-73) Recently Dr. Muhammad Nāẓim took up the question again and, after reshuffling the evidence

Subuktigīn was originally a descendant of Yazd-Jard, the last Sāsānid king of Persia, who had been defeated and whose kingdom had been included in the commonwealth of Islām during the *khulāfat* of 'Usmān. After the conquest of Persia the members of its royal family do not seem to have seen better days for at least five generations, for we are informed that Subuktigīn, who was sixth in descent from Yazd-Jard, was taken from Turkistān to Bukhārā and sold to Alptigīn by a merchant named Nasr, the Hājī.* All that we know about his early life is that he was

hitherto available, tried to close the controversy for good. His conclusions are that Alptigīn conquered Ghaznīn about Zil-hij, 351 A. H. after a siege of about four months and died after a reign of *eight months* (not *years*, as is erroneously said by many, including Raverty) in the month of Sha'bān, 352 A. H., that his son, Abū Is-hāq, succeeded him, but not before he had suffered a defeat and exile at the hands of Abū 'Alī (son of Abū Bakr) Lawīk and recovered his kingdom from him after inflicting a defeat on him on the 27th of Shawwāl, 354 A. H., that Is-hāq died on the 25th of Zil-qa'd, 355 A. H., that Bīrkātigīn ruled for eight or nine years (355-364 A. H.), and that Pīrī (Pīrītigīn) remained in power for two or three years (364-366 A. H.) See M. G., 24-27 and 175-176.

* See T. F. Vol. 1, p. 18, T. N. (Cal. ed. 1864), p. 6; and I. K., II, xii, 256 ff. (translator's note). It may be noted here that Subuktigīn was not a born slave. When the fortunes of his family had fallen to their lowest ebb, he was sold by one and purchased by another. Many a man of noble birth, including mighty monarchs, has often suffered this fate. Slavery, moreover, is not an inherent weakness. It is something imposed. Finally, a slave is as good a man in Islām as any other follower of it.

born about the year 331 A. H. (= 942-43 A. C.), that his father Jūq, was the chieftain of a minor principality in Turkistān and was renowned for his unusual physical strength, that at the age of twelve his father's principality was raided by a hostile *lashkar* and he was carried away by the raiders, and that he was kept as a prisoner for four years and then sold to Nasr the Hājī, who took him to Bukhārā and sold him to Alptigin. Impressed by the abilities of the promising youth, Alptigin treated him with great kindness and entrusted him with responsible posts; and it must be said to the credit of the latter that he fully justified the confidence reposed in him by the former. His devotion to the descendants of his master cannot be called in question. He served them with unmixed loyalty and enjoyed their confidence and favours till he was elevated to kingship by the people in accordance, it is said, with the will of Alptigin and married to his daughter.* Not content with what he had, he united the various clans of Afghānistān into a nation and conquered Lamghān and Sistān with their help and extended his sway right up to Khurāsān, and turned his kingdom

* Authorities are not in agreement on this point. In view of the fact that Subuktigin was the fourth in the line of succession (the first 3 being Is-hāq, Bilkātin and Pirītigin) it may be said that the will was not made at all, or if at all it was made, it must have remained a dead letter, for it was not acted upon for a long time for some reason or the other.

into a well-organized and prosperous state

When Subuktigīn ascended the throne, Bust was occupied by Tughān. One of the Sāmānid adventurers expelled him from his stronghold and occupied it. Tughān requested Subuktigīn for help and agreed to acknowledge the Amīr as his overlord after the recovery of Bust. Subuktigīn took up his cause and, after inflicting a defeat on his rival, restored him to his lost possession. After restoration, however, he became lukewarm in owning allegiance. His delay in remitting the promised tribute to Ghaznīn and the Amīr's insistence on it led to a scuffle, in which the latter sustained an injury at the hands of his vassal. But for the timely intervention of his servants, Tughān's career would have been cut short. He took to flight and sought shelter in Kurmaj, from where he never returned. Bust was occupied without encountering opposition and the Sāmānid Chief's *Dabir* (secretary) Abul Fateh, who had been living in retirement, was brought before the Amīr who treated him with great kindness in recognition of his wide learning and proficiency in arts. The learned recluse, it is said, was offered an important post, which he occupied till the death of the Amīr, but later he fell out with Mahmūd and went away to Turkistān.*

* T F, 1, 19, and T H, 1, 256

Qusdār,* which was not far away from —of Qusdār. Ghaznīn, was held by an arrogant chief, who is said to have boasted of the invincibility of his stronghold. An ambitious man like Subuktigin would not naturally tolerate the existence of another ambitious man who happened to be his neighbour. The Amīr led his forces against the chief and caught him in his very den. When the chief offered submission and agreed to pay a fixed amount of tribute every year, and to insert the name of the Amīr in the *Khutba*, he was confirmed him in his government of Qusdār.

After the conquest of Qusdār, Subuktigin's attention was attracted by the Rāja of the Punjab, named Jaipāl, who was advancing against him at the head of a huge army. But before dealing with the Hindū invasion of Ghaznīn it will be proper to trace the course of events which were responsible for the first great clash of arms between the Hindūs of India and the Musalmāns of Afghānistān. Economic forces such as increase in population, *etc*, necessitated the outward expansion of the

* In the original Persian writings this word is written as قساران - قساران - قساران - قساران - of which I have preferred the first and discarded its other toponyms. "The kingdom of Qusdār," says Dr M Nāzīm, "roughly corresponded with Balūchistān. The town of Qusdār is most probably modern Khuzdār" (*Vide M G*, 29, note 2, and *S I-M H*, 80-81).

Afghāns who migrated to the border-land between India and Afghānistān and colonized in the territory which comprised Kurmaj, Peshāwar and Shnūrān. This colonization was viewed with grave concern and resented by Jaipāl, the Hindū Rāja of Waihind, who scented danger from the Afghāns. Some skirmishes followed and pitched battles were also fought, but nothing decisive was accomplished by either party.*

Sometime later the Rāja incurred the displeasure of the Hindū Gakhars who joined hands with their neighbours, the Afghāns, and formed alliances with them against him. Cowed down by this combination, Jaipāl made peace with the Afghāns and also ceded a number of towns from Lamghān to Afghānistān to them for colonization on the condition that they would protect India against all Muslim invasions from beyond. For sometime this policy proved quite effective and the Afghāns defended the Indian frontier well and even checked the Sāmānid advances for Indian booty. Thus India enjoyed immunity from external

* It is stated that when the belhgerents withdrew to their respective places, the people of Kābul and Khalj replied, when inquired about the fate of Musalmāns and the state of affairs in Kohistān, that Kohistān should henceforth be called Afghānistān (i.e. habitat of *afghān* or noise) because *afghān* (noise) reigned supreme there. Thus, according to Ferishta, the people are called Afghāns and the place inhabited by them Afghānistān. (T. F., 1, 17).

invasions as a result of the Indo-Afghān alliance. But conditions changed abruptly when the Ghaznavids sprang into power and prominence.

Alptigin led a number of expeditions against the Afghāns and harassed them so much that they could not but seek the aid of the Indian Rāja against him. The Rāja responded to their request with scant courtesy and treated the frontier problem with indifference. After consulting the Rāja of Bhātiya,* he disposed it of by handing over to the Afghāns the territory inhabited by them so that they might establish their own kingdom which might serve as a buffer state. Thus for the first time did the Afghāns have an independent government in their own country. The indifference and aloofness of the Rāja, who did not want to meddle in frontier affairs, coupled with the political pressure that was brought to bear upon the Afghāns by the Ghaznavid ruler, Shaikh Hamid, the Afghān ruler of the Frontier, made peace with Subuktigin and agreed to pursue a policy of neutrality in so far as India was

* Various names such as Bhatner, Bhatinda, Bhāwalpur Uchh and Bhera have been advanced as possible identifications of Bhātiya; but none except Bhera can stand the 'crucial test of strategical considerations'. Professor Hodiwala has put forward some sound reasons in favour of Bhera (See *S. I. M. H.*, 138-39). Dr M. Nāzīm prefers Bhatinda. For his discussion on the subject, *vide M. G.*, 197 ff. I am inclined in favour of Bhera.

concerned Political expediency, coupled, perhaps, with religious considerations, prompted Subuktigīn to agree to the proposal and enter into an alliance with the Afghāns. He scored a brilliant point in that the Afghān blockade, which impeded his advance into India and acted as a stumbling block in his way, was removed with one stroke of political sagacity. And, for the Afghāns, it was a question of life and death. Their political existence was in danger. It was ensured as soon as they made peace with the Ghaznawids and formed an alliance with them. Henceforth they ceased to bother themselves about the safety of India. Subuktigīn gave them many concessions and won their sympathies and thus cleared his own path to India.*

The rise of a powerful kingdom under a Muslim monarch in the vicinity of the Indus must have most naturally disturbed Jaipāl's peace of mind and created fears and misgivings in his heart, especially when his dominions lay contiguous to those of his rival, Subuktigīn. The recognition of that kingdom spelt the negation of his political suzerainty. He had but two alternatives before him: either to arrest the rising tide of the Ghaznawid power or to forego his claims to political supremacy and risk the political existence of his own kingdom. He decided to follow the first course;

Jaipāl's invasion
of Ghaznīn and
his defeat

* T F, 1, 17-18.

and despite the opposition and protestations of the 'whole council, both Brahmans and Kshatrias,' he made preparations and mobilized his forces against his ambitious neighbour. The first great clash between the armies of Islām and those of Hindūism took place at Lamghān in the Khyber Pass*. It was accompanied by a violent storm, rain and thunder, which the superstitious ascribed to supernatural causes,† calculated to cause their destruction, so much

* Some modern scholars, (e.g. Dr I. Topa,) aver, without assigning any reasons, that the fight did not take place. They give credit to the Rāja for his 'warlike mentality' and say that he was quite prepared for the fight, but changed his mind at Ghaznī. How he could go as far as Ghaznī without fighting a battle and then suddenly change his mind and enter into a humiliating treaty is not explained. (See *Politics in Pre-Mughal Times*, by Dr. Ishwara Topa, pp. 28-29). It may also be noted here that in this clash also the Hindūs were the aggressors.

† The phenomenon of storm, rain and thunder, referred to above, is said to have been the direct result of Mahmūd's throwing a filthy thing in a clean fountain of water, haunted by spirits. This tale of wonder, is preserved in the *Tārikh-i-Yamīnī*, *Tārikh-i-Ferīshṭa* and other historical works, as a relic of the past. To be brief, it is said that there was a clean fountain of water which became tumultuous and gave rise to black clouds, thunders and snow-storms whenever a filthy matter was thrown in it, that Mahmūd, son of Subuktigin, who was aware of its qualities, caused it to be polluted, and that the results produced caused consternation in the Hindū army who believed that their gods had become angry with them and therefore sent snow-storms etc. for punishing them. This 'tale of wonder' would at once remind the

so that Jaipāl himself stood aghast at the horrible sight and saw safety in submission. He sued for peace and his request was accepted. According to the peace-treaty that was concluded, the Rāja agreed to the following conditions: (1) to pay an indemnity of one million *dirhams*, (2) to deliver fifty elephants, (3) to cede some cities and fortresses situated in his kingdom, (4) to accept the appointment of some officers in India by Subuktigīn, and (5) to keep some of

reader of a number of similar stories, such as the 'miraculous pitcher', 'the lake of wonder' and 'the well of wonder'. It records the survival of an ancient superstition, according to which *Nāgās* i.e., demons or dragons—half-human and half-brute—residing in such natural reservoirs as springs, fountains, wells and lakes, got offended when anything dirty was thrown in them and poured forth their wrath in the form of such phenomena as tempests, whirlwinds, clouds and snow-storms. It is told by the Buddhist travellers such as Fa Hian and Hiuen Tsiang, and the contemporary Muslim traveller, Alberūnī, had also heard of a well in the hills of Farghāna, which was haunted by spirits endowed with supernatural powers. The phenomenon that caused consternation in Jaipāl's army must have been similar to that which destroyed the Anglo-Indian army in 1842 A. C.—a snow-storm, and the story that the gods of the Hindūs had got annoyed with them seems to have been set up with a view to frighten the Hindū soldiers who had a firm faith not only in supernatural but also in unnatural and even anti-natural causes, and who felt sure that their gods were really angry with them. For references to the tale of wonder vide *Tārikh-i-Yamīnī* in E & D, II, 20, T F I, 19, Dr Sachau's translation of the *Asār-ul-Bāqīya*, 235; and S I-M H 134 - 136

his relatives with Subuktigīn as hostages until the indemnity was paid

Historians are unanimous on the point that when Jaipāl returned safely to his capital and found himself secure from external danger, he thought that the treaty could be set at naught at his own sweet will. Behaving in a Kautilyan fashion and regarding the terms of the treaty as a scrap of paper to be torn to pieces, he not only refused to abide by them but also threw into prison the officers whom Subuktigīn had left to see that the Rāja lived up to his words. This brazen breach of faith drew down upon him the wrath of the Ghaznawid overlord who marched against him in order to punish him for his perfidy.* Jaipāl was not idling away his time. He had, in the meantime, prepared himself for the inevitable and enlisted the support of the Rājas of Delhi, Ajmer, Kālinjar and Kanauj † He set out to receive the Afghān army with his hordes of Hindūs. In the engagement that was

* At first Subuktigīn did not believe the news of Jaipāl's betrayal and, therefore, paid no heed to it. According to 'Utbī, it was only when he was convinced by 'the repeated accounts' that he had been defrauded and bamboozled that he marched against Jaipāl to punish him for his 'wickedness' and 'infidelity.'

† T F, i, 20. It is, however, contended that Ajmer was not yet founded. It is said to have been founded in 1100 A. C. (*Indian Antiquary*, xxxvi, 162)

fought on the bank of the Indus, the allies suffered a crushing defeat. After victory, Subuktigīn levied heavy contributions on the neighbouring districts, received assurances from the Rāja that he would remit tribute regularly to Ghaznīn and amassed immense booty, including 200 war elephants. Leaving Peshāwar under the command of a trusted officer and putting 10,000 horse at his disposal, the victor marched back to his native Ghaznīn.

Politically considered, the result of this invasion was that a mighty Hindū confederacy was defeated and the superiority of the Musalmāns over the Hindūs was established; and

Importance of
Subuktigīn's
victory

though India was not yet conquered, the right route to attack her was discovered, for Subuktigīn was the first Muslim king who invaded India from the North-West Frontier. It may also be noted here that in the first clash between Subuktigīn and Jaipāl, the latter was the aggressor and the second was the direct outcome of his breach of faith.*

When Subuktigīn ascended the throne of Ghaznīn the Sāmānid power was on the wane and the Kingdom of Bukhārā was in the throes of disintegration. Amīr Nūh, the Sāmānid King, was hemmed in by insurgents on all sides and the governors of

Relations with
the Sāmānid
overlord

* T F, i, 27; and C. H. I, iii, 12.

the outlying provinces were in constant rebellion. All this afforded a most favourable opportunity to an ambitious leader for the realization of his ambitions, and the Amīr of Ghaznīn could have successfully fished in the troubled waters. Far from betraying his overlord, he continued to acknowledge him as such and gave ample proof of his loyalty and devotion by lending him a helping hand against his enemies. When Abū 'Alī Sīmjūrī* and Fā'iq, two seasoned intriguers, joined hands against their overlord, Amīr Nūh, the latter called in the aid of Subuktigin, who was ever ready to help him in his hours of need. In response to his request, Subuktigin set out with his forces and reached Herāt, where the insurgents had mustered in strength. He opened negotiations with Abū 'Alī and Fā'iq and proved himself a good peace-maker by prevailing upon them to make peace with their overlord and to pay him an indemnity of 15,000,000 *dirhams*. Not long afterwards, however, Abū 'Alī violated the terms of the peace-treaty and Subuktigin took the field against him in person, firmly determined to punish him for his perfidy. The rebel put up a vigorous opposition, but a timely attack, delivered by Mahmūd, decided the day against him. When defeated and driven to despair,

* Sir V/ Haig calls him Abū 'Alī Sunjūr, which is without authority and hence incorrect (C. H. I., III, 12)

he fled to Raiy and found shelter with Fakhr-ud-Daulah. The victorious father and son, viz, Subuktigīn and Mahmūd, triumphantly entered Herāt, where they were accorded a right royal reception by the grateful Amīr of Bukhārā. Amīr Nūh rewarded the services of Subuktigīn by conferring upon him the government of Balkh and the title of *Nasr-ud-Dīn-waa-Daulah* * and those of his son, Mahmūd, by bestowing upon him the command of the troops of Khurāsān and the title of *Sasf-ud-Daulah*. When Mahmūd entered Nishāpur he was taken by surprise by the forces of Abū 'Alī Sīmjurī and Fā'iq and the town was occupied by them. After this reverse Mahmūd retreated to Herāt and reorganized his forces there. When Subuktigīn learnt of this disaster, he marched post-haste and attacked Abū 'Alī Sīmjurī. Again a timely attack delivered by Mahmūd decided the day in his favour. Fed up with fruitless struggles and humiliated by repeated reverses, both Abū 'Alī and his friend, Fā'iq, made pourparlers for peace to Amīr Nūh. When their ambassadors reached Bukhārā, the Amīr threw into prison the one sent by Fā'iq and received with marked respect the one sent by Abū 'Alī. This was done with a view to breaking down their combination. When Fā'iq learnt of the fate of his ambassador, he

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* Subuktigīn already enjoyed the title of *Mu'in-ud-Daulah* (Vide Sachao *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*, p 130)

fled to Ilak Khān and sought his interference, while Abū 'Alī was taken prisoner on his arrival at Bukhārā and made over to Subuktigīn for safe custody. Meanwhile Fā'iq had prevailed upon Ilak Khān to launch an attack on Bukhārā. When Nūh heard of the impending invasion of Bukhārā by Ilak Khān, he again invoked the assistance of Subuktigīn. Ever willing to furnish proof of his fidelity, the Amīr of Ghaznīn set out at the head of his army to the help of his overlord. On reaching Bukhārā, however, he found that Amīr Nūh had changed his mind and was not prepared to meet the invader under the advice of his minister, 'Abdullah *bin* Muhammad *bin* Uzair. But for this, he would have plunged himself into a decisive war against Ilak Khān. He too, however, now made peace with Ilak Khān and ceded all the Sāmānid territory to the east of Qatwān to him. At the same time he also sent his son, Mahmūd, to Bukhārā at the head of 20,000 horse to bring about the dismissal of the cowardly *Vasīr*, 'Abdullah. Frightened out of his wits, Amīr Nūh dismissed 'Abdullah and appointed another *Vasīr* nominated by Subuktigīn.* A little later when Subuktigīn and Mahmūd were both away from Khurāsān, 'Abul Qāsim, brother of Abū 'Alī Sīmjurī, availed himself of their absence and occupied Nishāpur without encountering much opposition. His success was, however, short-lived, for he had to eva-

cuates the place on the arrival of Mahmūd and his uncle, Bughrājuq,* from Herāt.

Amidst these transactions, at the height of his power, Subuktigīn, who was exhausted by the strain and stress of ceaseless war and conquest, sank and quietly passed away in 997 A. C., bequeathing a fairly large and well-organized kingdom to his son, Mahmūd. He was a brave, righteous and upright ruler, who combined in his person the qualities of a soldier and a statesman. He ruled his kingdom with great prudence, justice and moderation for full twenty years. He has gone down in history as an *Amīr-i-'Adl* or Just Ruler, who was adored and obeyed by his soldiers, whose sufferings he shared, and loved and respected by his subjects, whose interests he always tried to promote. His loyalty and devotion to the Sāmānid King, whom he acknowledged as his suzerain, stand in dramatic contrast to the treason and treachery of the Bukhāran nobility in relation to their overlord and reflects great credit on his character. Towards the close of his reign he had grown so strong that foreign potentates eagerly sought his friendship. He was a really great lover of learning and an equally great patron of the learned. His advice to his son Mahmūd, who rose to be one of the greatest patrons of literature,

* *Vide T. Y.*, 75-107, *T. M.*, 235, *Z. A. p.*, 58; *T. N.*, 75, and *M. G.*, 30-32

is particularly interesting. He told him to conquer the hearts of the literary luminaries of his kingdom by looking after their welfare and carrying out their wishes, pointing out that his generosity in this sphere would immortalize his name.* The treatment meted out by him to Abul Fateh, the *Dabīr* of the Sāmānid Chief, after the expulsion of Tughān from Bust is a glowing tribute to his patronage of learning† Later Muslim historians have tried to represent him as a champion of Islām whose principal occupation was to wage wars with the infidels of India and to propagate his religion with fire and sword, despite the fact that he 'never crossed the Indus and led only two expeditions against the Hindūs' His hands were too full of affairs at home to allow him time to draw out his sword and propagate Islām in India at its point. It was only on two occasions that he had to fight the Hindūs of India, and that too for political reasons. The first of his Indian expeditions was undertaken when he was attacked by Rāja Jaipāl of Lāhore and the second when the Rāja proved perfidious and violated the terms of the treaty solemnly entered into after his defeat in the first expedition. Sir W Haig is perfectly right in saying that 'these expeditions were undertaken rather as measures of reprisal and for the purpose of securing

* T F, I, 31.

† See *supra*, p 8.

his dominions than with any intention of propagating the faith.* There is absolutely no doubt that as a good Muslim he was profoundly interested in the cause of Islām, but it will be too much to credit him with what he never did or attempted to do. He did not propagate Islām in India at the point of the sword. In fact he did not propagate it there even by peaceful means. Apart from the fact that his sway was confined only to a fringe of the Indian Continent, the rest of which remained untouched by him, his political pre-occupations left him but little leisure to do so. This is the verdict of history.

From the preceding account it is evident that about the end of the 10th century the Ghaznawid Empire was in the making. The Ghaznawids, with the solitary exception of Alptigin, the founder of the dynasty, were gradually exerting themselves and asserting their authority in the name of the Sāmānid King. Their motives were political and economic and not religious—creation of an independent empire of their own and its maintenance and not the propagation of Islām and its principles and practices in India. They had but one end in view, *i.e.*, political aggrandizement, and they laboured to achieve it by all legitimate means. The Sāmānid name and authority served their purpose well and they

* C H I, III, 12

exploited these words fully to their best advantage. Under this political cloak the Ghaznawid power expanded unseen and without exciting jealousies or awakening rivalry. The main object of the growing Ghaznawid State was to strengthen itself and to cement its foundations and to develop itself into a powerful empire. It was for purely political considerations that the Ghaznawid rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sāmānid King, otherwise they had little regard for him or for his power and prestige. This is borne out by the fact that they freed themselves from the nominal political tutelage of the Sāmānid Sovereignty the moment they felt themselves strong enough to curb the opposition of their enemies. The foundations of the great Ghaznawid Empire were laid by Subuktigin and the splendid superstructure was raised by his more famous son and successor, Mahmūd, under whom it became a living force, a real symbol of power and a sure sign of authority.

CHAPTER II

SULTAN MAHMUD THE GREAT — I

HIS CONQUESTS IN CENTRAL ASIA

Introductory Mahmūd is really the first remarkable figure in the history of Muslim India to claim our serious attention.

He was the real maker of the Ghaznawid State and the first Muslim conqueror of a considerable part of India. Under him the semi-independent State of Ghaznīn rose to a full-fledged and fully developed Ghaznawid Empire. He picked up the policy of his father, pursued it with prudence and carried it to its logical conclusion. Though it is only in a limited sense that he can be regarded as a ruler of India, yet the spade-work he did and the ground he prepared for the establishment of a Muslim empire in India cannot be ignored, and it is mainly in this capacity that he deserves a prominent place in Indian history.

Early life of Mahmūd Abul Qāsim Mahmūd was the eldest son of Subuktigīn from his wife who was the daughter of an *Amīr* of Zābulistān.* In spite of the efforts of his historians, mediæval as well as modern.

* S N, 108, T F, 1, 23, and T G, 395. It is for this reason that Mahmūd was also known as 'Mahmūd-i-Zābulī'.

the early life of this mighty monarch of his age still remains wrapped in obscurity. A few stray facts bearing on the subject are known and they will not be out of place here. He was born on the night between the 1st and 2nd of November, 971 A. C.* He received his early education on orthodox lines under the tuition of a learned man. Well-grounded in various branches of Islamic literature, he knew the Holy *Qurān* by heart and was fully conversant with Muslim law and Tradition. His father was particularly keen about the education of his children. He himself had instructed Mahmūd in the science of statecraft and crystallized its principles, as propounded by himself, into a *Pand-Nāmāh*. Mahmūd, moreover, seems to have undergone a regular course of apprenticeship in the art of administration. We find him acting as a deputy of his father during his absence from Ghaznī. He was hardly seven years of age at that time. Later he was entrusted with the government of the province of Zamīn-Dāwar. He was given a

* Historians have spun some strange stories round the birth of Mahmūd. For instance, at one place it is recorded that his birth 'synchronized with the falling down of an idol-temple at Waihand, and that shortly before his birth Subuktigin saw in a dream a tree issuing out of the chafing-dish in his room and spreading out rapidly so as to overshadow the whole world, thus presaging the future iconoclast and conqueror' (*Al G.*, 34, note 3, *T F*, 1, 23, and *T N*, 76.) Such stories are not peculiar to the case of Mahmūd. Similar stories are told about the birth of Alexander the Great. (See Plutarch's *Lives*, II, p. 104.)

regular training in the military arts and sciences of his day. His skill and proficiency as a swordsman, lance-fighter and marksman were *par excellence*. As a constant companion of his father in his military expeditions, he had picked up experience, which proved so useful in his career of conquest. We have had occasions to meet him as a lieutenant of his father on a number of battle-fields. During his boyhood he gave a good account of his military genius by successfully conducting a punitive expedition against Ghūr. He acquitted himself creditably in a battle that took place between his father and Jaipāl near Lamghān in 986-87 A. C. As a result, perhaps, of some court intrigue, he fell out with his father and was thrown into prison. This estrangement was, however, short-lived. The misunderstanding was soon removed and Mahmūd was restored to filial favours. Mahmūd's services to the Sāmānid King against Abū 'Alī Simjūrī and Fā'iq, in conjunction with his father, have been dealt with and need not be dilated upon here*. He was at Nishāpur and in the 26th year of his life when he heard the sad news of the death of his father.†

In accordance with the will made by Subuktigīn a few days before his death, the nobles of Balkh raised his younger son, Ismā'il, to the throne and proclaimed him as their

Struggle for
Succession

* See *supra*, pp 16 ff.

† See *M. G.*, 34 ff

king With a view to strengthening his position, the new king did homage to his Sāmānid overlord and to win the good-will of the army he lavishly distributed wealth among his soldiers. There was, however, a party of the people who believed that fitness to rule was the first and foremost qualification for succession to the throne. That party espoused the cause of Mahmūd, who was the elder and decidedly the abler and more energetic of the two brothers. Mahmūd, who was no less ambitious than Ismā'īl, refused to acquiesce in the settlement. He wrote a letter of condolence to his brother Ismā'īl, assured him of his fraternal love and asked him to retain Balkh and cede Ghaznīn to him in recognition of his superior rights. He also pointed out in that letter that he would not have disputed the will of his father if Ismā'īl had possessed the requisite qualifications for kingship. The demand was not met and the rival claimants referred the matter to the arbitrament of the sword. At this juncture Abul Hārīs Farīghūnī, father-in-law of Mahmūd, tried to patch up the differences between the two brothers, but he was considered as an interested mediator and thus his efforts to bring about a compromise ended in smoke. After that the two brothers mobilized their forces and advanced on Ghaznīn from their respective places—Mahmūd from Nishāpur and Ismā'īl from Balkh. Before they met on the battle-field, Mahmūd won over his brother, Abul Muzaffar Nasr, the governor of Bust, and his

uncle Bughrājuq, the governor of Herāt, and made a final attempt at compromise, but that too suffered the same fate. His father-in-law had already thrown the weight of his power and influence on his side and now there was nothing to check him from asserting his claims by force of arms. The two armies, almost equal in numerical strength, met on the plain of Ghaznīn and a well-balanced battle was fought in March, 998 A. C. Ismāil, who was more of a scholar than a soldier, held out heroically for the whole day, but eventually bowed before the calm and cool courage and superior generalship of his brother. Towards the close of the day Ismāil's forces took to flight and he himself sought shelter in a fort; but feeling sure that he could not sustain a long siege, he threw himself at the mercy of his brother, who had promised to treat him with kindness. After winning a decisive victory, Mahmūd placed Ismāil 'in nominal confinement' and provided him with every comfort and convenience. About the end of 999 A. C. Ismāil abused the indulgence shown to him by his brother and hatched up a plot against him. Before the nefarious plan was put into practice, Mahmūd got an inkling of the plot*

* How Mahmūd came to know about the plot is thus stated by 'Utbi: —

One day the Sultān went out hunting in company with Ismāil and Nushtigin. On the way he saw the latter putting his hand on the hilt of his sword and looking towards the former for some pre-arranged signal. Mahmūd

and immediately ordered the execution of Nushtigīn Kāj, who was the principal agent. After that Ismā'īl was transferred to the custody of Abul Hāris at Jūzjānān, where he passed the rest of his life in peace *.

After restoring law and order in Ghaznīn, Mahmūd marched to Balkh and paid his respects to Amīr Abul Hāris Mansūr, who had succeeded his father, Amīr Nūh. The Amīr congratulated him on his success against his brother and confirmed him in his government of Balkh, Herāt, Bust, and Tirmīz. As regards Khurāsān, the Amīr said that he had already granted it to Begtūzūn, an officer who wielded enormous influence at Bukhārā.† Mahmūd made another constitutional attempt to get back Khurāsān. He sent Abul Hasan Harmulī to Bukhārā to plead his case, but the Amīr declined to do what he desired. Failing to achieve his object by peaceful means, he resorted to force. He advanced against Nishāpur. At his approach Begtūzūn deserted the place.

detected the move, and Ismā'īl, feeling that the Sultān had seen Nushtigīn's action, showed himself unconcerned (T Y, 132)

* T. G, 393, T Y, 110, 114-16, 118, 128-32, T F, 1, 22; and M G, 38-41

† For the events leading to the appointment of Begtūzūn to the command of the troops of Khurāsān, see M G, p 42, note 2

and applied for reinforcements. The Amīr hastened to the scene for helping him and halted at Sarakhs. Mahmūd, who had occupied Nishāpur in the meantime, left it without fighting a battle and retreated to Marv-Rūd. Nishāpur was re-occupied by Begtūzūn, who next marched to Sarakhs to join the Amīr. Suspecting the Amīr of secretly favouring Mahmūd, Fā'iq and Begtūzūn formed a plot against him, took him prisoner on the pretext of a meeting in connection with an alleged problem of importance and then enthroned Abul Fawāris Abdul Malik, a younger brother of Amīr Abul Hāris. Mahmūd now took up the cause of the ex-Amīr and proceeded to Sarakhs to punish Fā'iq and Begtūzūn. At his approach, both the traitors fled to Marv. Mahmūd pursued them thither and actually encamped in front of that place. Before, however, the fight began the parties came to an understanding, whereby Begtūzūn was allowed to retain the command of the troops of Khurāsān as before and Mahmūd was confirmed in his possession of Herāt, Balkh, etc. Thus ended the campaign without achieving the object for which it was launched.† The peace concluded was short-lived. It was broken as soon as the followers of the Amīr, instigated by Dārā bin Qābūs who was opposed to the terms

* Utbī accounts for this unconditional retreat of Mahmūd by saying that he disdained to deal the final blow to the Samānids (T. Y., 124)

† See Z. A., 60, and T. M., 805. It is stated that

of the treaty, attacked the rear of Mahmūd's forces under the command of Nasr. This was enough to serve as a *casus belli* for Mahmūd. Marshalling his forces in battle array and distributing the commands of the main divisions of his army to trusted officers, he attacked the combined forces of Amīr Abdul Malīk, Begtūzūn, Fā'iq and Abul Qāsim Sīmjurī, and defeated them in a battle near Marv on the 16th of May, 999 A C. Abdul Malīk fled to Bukhārā, Abul Qāsim to Kohistān and Begtūzūn to Nishāpur. Driven out of Nishāpur, Begtūzūn fled to Jurjān and when he was pursued thither also he crossed over to Bukhārā. Abul Qāsim, who had established himself in Kohistān was attacked by an officer of Mahmūd, defeated and dislodged from the position he had occupied. Mahmūd was now the master of the 'whole' of Khurāsān. Entrusting the command of the troops of that province to his brother Nasr, he proceeded apace to Balkh to see the state of affairs at Bukhārā. About this time he informed Al-Qādir Billah, the Khalīfa of Baghdād, of his victory over Abdul Malīk and received from him a diploma of investiture and the titles of *Amin-ul-Millāh* and *Yamin-ud-Daulah*. Abdul Malīk was preparing himself for a final fight with Mahmūd when the death of his skilled and seasoned

Mahmūd was so pleased with this result that he distributed 2,000 *dīnārs* as alms among the poor. Why he felt delighted at this unsatisfactory peace-treaty is not explained.

general, Fā'iq, brought his schemes to an abrupt close. At the end of October, 999 A. C. Ilak Khān conquered Bukhārā, captured the Amīr together with his kith and kin and put an end to the Sāmānid Dynasty. Abū Ibrāhīm Ismā'īl al-Muntasir, son of Amīr Nūh, who had managed to escape from the custody of Ilak Khān, made abortive efforts to retrieve the fallen fortunes of his family. In Khwārizm he enlisted the support of those who still clung to the cause of the Sāmānids. With their help he attacked Bukhārā, but failed to take it. Thereafter he attacked Nishāpur and inflicted a defeat on Nasr on February 25, 1001 A. C. When, however, Mahmūd arrived with reinforcements, he fled to Jurjān. In September next he appeared again in Khurāsān. At his approach Nasr evacuated Nishāpur and applied for reinforcements. Mahmūd sent Abū Sa'īd Altūntāsh to his help and the combined forces made an attack on Muntasir, who suffered a crushing defeat and took to flight. Ere long he came back from Jurjān, whither he had fled, and took Sarakhs. He was defeated by Nasr and many of his officers, including Abul Qāsim, were taken prisoners and sent to Ghaznīn. Muntasir tried his luck in Transoxiana and other places, but failure followed him everywhere. He now made an appeal for help to Mahmūd who issued instructions to the governor of Herāt to join forces with him in his venture against Ilak Khān. Without waiting for reinforcements, he marched against Bukhārā and after suffering

heavy losses returned to Khurāsān. To put a stop to the disturbances he was creating in his new dominions, Mahmūd sent a large army against him. He fled to Jurjān and made yet another unsuccessful attempt to recover Bukhārā. His stormy career was cut short by an Arab in the Ghuzz desert.

After the conquest of Bukhārā by Ilak Khān* and that of Khurāsān by Sultān Mahmūd, the two great conquerors of their day exchanged friendly greetings and accepted the river Oxus as the boundary-line between their kingdoms. To strengthen this friendship, Mahmūd married the daughter of Ilak Khān. But the Khān coveted the province of Khurāsān so much that even this matrimonial alliance did not exercise any check on his ambitions. No sooner had Mahmūd marched against Multān, than he detailed two divisions of his army against Khurāsān—one under the command of his brother, Chaghartigin, and the other under that of his relative, Subāshitigin. The two generals conquered Balkh and Herāt and with their conquest the whole of Khurāsān passed into the hands of Ilak Khān. Mahmūd had anticipated this invasion and had therefore issued necessary instructions to his officers before his departure from Ghaznī. As soon as he

* Muslim historians call these Khāns of Turkistān 'Afrāsīyābī Turks' and modern historians call them 'Qarā-Khānids' (M. G., 47, p. 3)

learnt of this invasion, he hurried up the settlement of terms with the ruler of Multān and returned to his capital. Taking a huge army with him, which was swelled by the contingents furnished by the Khaljīs, he appeared before Balkh. Chaghartigīn took to flight while Subāshītigīn was driven from place to place till he was brought to bay near Marv and defeated. His brother was taken prisoner and he himself fled to Bukhārā. Ilak Khān had, meanwhile, sent Chaghartigīn to Balkh, which he was allowed to occupy. After driving out Subāshītigīn from Khurāsān, Mahmūd turned towards Balkh. When he reached there, Chaghartigīn took to his heels and sought shelter in Bukhārā. Balkh was occupied and Khurāsān was brought under control. Ilak Khān still aspired for the sovereignty of Khurāsān. He now secured the aid of his kinsman, Yūsuf Qadīr Khān,* ruler of Kāshghar, and set out with as many as 50,000 warriors. Mahmūd marched out to meet him with an army which was a medley of Afghāns, Khaljīs, Indians, Ghuzz, Turkomāns and Kurds. The two armies met on the plain of Katar on the 5th of January, 1008 A. C. The battle began favourably for the Khāns, but Mahmūd's dashing heroism at great personal risks infused fresh life into his soldiers who fell fearlessly on the

* His name is also written as Qadr Khān (T M), Qutūr Khān (J T) and Qaidū Khān (T G). I have followed Gardīzī who is supported by Farrukhī (See M G, 51, f. n. 1).

foe and scattered the hordes on all sides. Mahmūd's victory was complete and the spoils of war were enormous. With a view to retrieve his reputation, Ilak Khān entered into a secret alliance with the ruler of Qusdār and then proposed to attack Khurāsān with the help of his brother, Ahmad Tughān Khān, and Qadīr Khān. His efforts bore no fruit, for the proposal was turned down by both the last-named, and of them his brother, Tughān Khān, sent his ambassador to cultivate cordial relations with Mahmūd. Thus infuriated, Ilak Khān advanced to invade the territory of his own brother. Before the two brothers met on the battle-field a reconciliation was brought about between them by Mahmūd when the matter was referred to him for arbitration.* Ilak Khān was succeeded by his brothers, Ahmad Tughān Khān and Abū Mansūr Arslān Khān, both of whom remained on good terms with Mahmūd. One of them, viz., Arslān Khān, also married one of his daughters to Mas'ūd, son of Mahmūd. On Arslān's death, his kingdom became a bone of contention between his kinsmen, Qadīr Khān of Kāshghar and Tughān Khān, brother of 'Alitigin of Bukhārā. In the struggle for succession that ensued between them, the latter was successful. Lest the two ambitious brothers should grow strong and menace the security of Khurāsān, Mahmūd made up his mind to curb their power. Complaints received from

* T. Y., 248-50; and K T, IV, 156

the people of Transoxiana against the tyranny of 'Alītigīn provided a most plausible pretext and Mahmūd marched against Samarqand where 'Alītigīn had taken his stand. At his approach 'Alītigīn took to flight, but his wife and children were taken prisoners and treated with respect consistent with their position. Qadīr Khān of Kāshghar and Mahmūd exchanged greetings and cemented their friendship by matrimonial alliances. While Mahmūd married his daughter, Zainab, to Qadīr Khān's son, Bughrā Khān,* Qadīr Khān gave one of his daughters in marriage to Muḥammad, son of Mahmūd †. Hardly had Mahmūd left Samarqand for Ghaznīn when 'Alītigīn emerged from his retreat, defeated Qadīr Khān and took possession of Samarqand. Qadīr Khān sought but failed to secure the support of Mahmūd, because the latter was about to proceed against Somnāth. On his return, however, Mahmūd sent a large force to Qadīr Khān who defeated 'Alītigīn and compelled him to come to terms. Thereafter Qadīr Khān continued to be friendly towards Mahmūd.

The Ma'mūnids, *i.e.*, the rulers of Jurjāniyyah, were at first the feudatories of the Sāmānids but became independent later on. One of them, Abul Hasan 'Alī, married Mahmūd's

* His original name was Yaghjītigīn (*T M*, 230)

† For marriage ceremonies *etc.*, see *Z A*, 83-84, and *T M*, 230-31

sister called Kah-Kālji His brother Abul Abbās, who succeeded him, married his widow and professed to possess profound respect for Mahmūd When, however, the Sultān asked him to acknowledge him as his overlord, he referred the matter to a council of officers who refused to submit to foreign yoke When the soldiers learnt of this, they mutinied, but were silenced by a lavish distribution of gold. This was, however, a lull before the storm that was yet to come Finding himself between the devil and the deep sea, 'Abbās contracted a secret alliance with the Khāns of Turkistān When Mahmūd heard of this secret alliance, he set out with a huge army against Balkh But for the timely intervention of the Khāns of Turkistān, Mahmūd would have dealt a decisive blow to his brother-in-law 'Abbās had now no alternative but to submit. He acknowledged Mahmūd as his suzerain and inserted his name in the *Khutba* The soldiers, who had been silenced only with gold, regarded this submission as a standing insult to the honour of their country. They advanced on the capital and perpetrated a number of atrocities which culminated in the assassination of 'Abul Abbās On hearing of the tragic fate of his vassal and brother-in-law, Mahmūd marched against Khwārizm at the head of his army Before taking action he arranged the safe return of his sister and secured the neutrality of the Khāns of Turkistān The regicides inflicted heavy losses on the Ghaznawid forces, but

ultimately victory sided with the Sultān. The rebels were completely crushed and the murderers of Abul Abbās were put to the sword. The government of Khwārizm and Jurjāniyyah was entrusted to Amīr Hājib Altūntāsh who had distinguished himself in the fight, and the title of Khwārizmshāh was conferred upon him in recognition of his services. After introducing necessary administrative changes and making appointments and transfers, Mahmūd marched back to Ghaznīn.

Abū Nasr Muhammad *bin* Asad-ash-Shār was wise enough to bow before the rising star of Sultān Mahmūd. He acknowledged the Sultān as his suzerain and read the *Khutba* in his name. But his son, Shāh Muhammad, the younger Shār, offended Mahmūd by refusing to accompany him on an expedition and behaving improperly when called upon to explain his conduct. As a result, Gharshistān* was attacked. The elder Shār submitted, but the younger took position in an almost inaccessible hill-fort and from there offered resistance. The fort was besieged and a breach was made in one of its outer walls. The garrison held out heroically, but eventually they sought safety in surrendering themselves. Shāh Muhammad was made captive along with a number

* Gharshistān is also called Gharjistān and Gharj-ash-Shar in some accounts.

of his officers and sent to Mastang,* where he died some time later. Gharshistān was annexed to the Ghaznavid Empire and placed in charge of Abul Hasan-al-Manī'i, governor of Marv-Rūd, in 1012 A. C. The elder Shār was taken to Ghaznīn and treated with marked respect.

The origin of the Saljūqs is shrouded in the thick mist of antiquity. There are several conflicting accounts about them. Of them, the most probable seems to be this. An important section of the Ghuzz tribe shot off from the parent-stock under their leader, named Saljūq, after whose name it came to be known later on, and migrated to Transoxiana and settled down there. At times they rendered help to the Sāmānids in their wars with their neighbours of Turkistān. By lending a helping hand to 'Alitigin in his conquest of Bukhārā, Isrā'il son of Saljūq acquired immense influence at Bukhārā. When Mahmūd marched against Transoxiana, 'Alitigin managed to make good his escape but Isrā'il fell into his hands, was taken prisoner and sent to the fort of Kālanjar †. According to an account, the Saljūqs were either induced or forced to migrate to the south of the Oxus and settle down in Khurāsān.

* Mastang is situated in modern Balūchistān

† This Kālanjar was different from the fort of Kālinjar, situated in Bundhelkhand. It was situated to the north of Jhelum in the pass leading into Kashmīr (*Vide M. G.*, 64 foot-note)

It seems more probable, however, that they remained in Transoxiana, owing allegiance to the Sultān and waging wars on their own account till the close of his reign when they began to make encroachments upon his immediate possessions. Lest they should become a menace to his power, Mahmūd led a number of expeditions against them personally and defeated them in many battles. They were held in check at that time and they could not enter Khurāsān in force until the accession of Sultān Mas'ūd to the throne.*

When Bughrājuq, the governor of Fūshanj, had gone to help Mahmūd in his struggle for the throne, his province was occupied by Tāhir son of Walī-ud-Daulah Abū Ahmad Khalaf *bin* Ahmad, the governor of Sīstān who had become independent after the fall of the Sāmānids. After his accession Mahmūd helped Bughrājuq and enabled him to recover his province, but he pursued the enemy in a state of drunkenness and got killed. In December, 999 A C Mahmūd marched against Khalaf and forced him to purchase peace on payment of 100,000 *dīnārs* as indemnity. After that the Sultān returned to his capital. Subsequently a quarrel took place between Khalaf and his son, Tāhir, and the father managed to imprison his son and put him to death. Infuriated by this

Conquest
of Sīstān.

* See K T, iv, 266-68 and 321 ff; T N, 116 ff, T G, 134-35, Z A, 84 ff, and *Ency of Islam*, ii, 168 ff

act of Khalaf, the people invited Mahmūd to rescue them from his tyranny. In response, the Sultān set out at the head of his army and laid siege to the fort of Sīstān. Khalaf offered a stubborn resistance, but sought safety in submission. Mahmūd extended him his pardon, allowed him to retain his riches and sent him to Jūzjānān at his own choice. After appointing Hājib Qinjī as governor of Sīstān, the Sultān went back to Ghaznīn. Not long after his departure a rebellion broke out in that province and Mahmūd had to take the field in person. He put down the rebellion and massacred a large number of the rebels. Placing the province in charge of his own brother Nasr, Mahmūd returned to Ghaznīn.

According to the *Tārīkh-i-Gusīdah*, when Khalaf bin Ahmad of Sīstān was defeated by Mahmūd, he addressed the victor as 'Sultān'—an appellation which signifies authority or power—and the latter liked it and adopted it as his title, giving up that of *Amīr**. Baizawī, on the other hand, would have us believe that the Khalīfa of Baghdād (Al-Qādir Billah) confirmed Mahmūd in the government of Khurāsān and Sīstān, sent him a robe of honour and also conferred upon him the title of 'Sultān' in honour of his victory over Abdul Malīk.† This seems to be improbable for the simple reason that Mahmūd never

Assumption
of the title
of 'Sultān'

* T. G., 396; and *Census of Ghazni Kings*, 5.

† S. A. M. A., 9, foot-note.

used this title in his coins and remained content with the title of *Amīr*, with which the Khalifa distinguished him.* There is a strong tradition that Mahmūd was the first king who styled himself as *Sultān* †

Conquest of Ghūr Muhammad *bin* Sūrī, ‡ the ruler of Mandīsh (eastern Ghūr), acknowledged the suzerainty of Subuktigīn but renounced allegiance after his death and adopted a hostile attitude. In 1011 A C Mahmūd marched against him. The Ghūrīds pooled their resources, offered him a united front and inflicted a defeat on Altūntāsh who led the advance-guard. Mahmūd joined him immediately afterwards and their combined forces defeated the Ghūrīds in some engagements. After these reverses, Ibn Sūrī retired to the inaccessible hills from where he could not be dislodged. Mahmūd resorted to a ruse. He turned back and feigned flight. The simple unassuming Ghūrīds now rushed out in pursuit of the Ghaznawīds, and when they reached a plain Mahmūd turned round and made a desperate charge on the disorderly hordes and scattered them pell-mell. Ibn Sūrī, his son and officers were taken prisoners and sent to Ghaznīn. Abū 'Alī son of Ibn Sūrī, who had quarrelled with

* C H. I, III, 14, foot-note

† S N, 44, K T, IX, 92, T. N, 75, and W. Barthold's *Turkestan*, 271.

‡ 'Utbī calls him simply Ibn Sūrī. Also see M G, 70, foot-note 4

his father and taken refuge at Ghaznīn, was made governor of Mandīsh. In 1015 A. C. Mahmūd attacked Khwāb'n,* captured some forts and returned to Ghaznīn. Some time later the north-western part of Ghūr, called Tab, was conquered by Mas'ūd and almost the whole of Ghūr, excepting perhaps the inaccessible interior, was annexed to the Ghaznawid Empire †

Qusdār was converted into a dependency of Ghaznīn by Subuktigīn. In 1010-11 A. C. its ruler renounced allegiance and withheld tribute at the instigation of Ilak Khān. In December, 1011 A. C. Mahmūd mobilized his forces against it and laid siege to its fort. Its ruler offered submission and promised to pay 15,000,000 *dirhams*‡ as an indemnity, to deliver fifteen elephants and to remit the annual tribute regularly. In return for all this he was allowed to retain his kingdom as a dependency of Ghaznīn.

In 1020 A. C. Mahmūd undertook an expedition against 'the pleasant valleys' of the rivers Nūr and Qīrāt § While the ruler of the Qīrāt valley offered submission and accepted Islām

* This was the south-western district of Ghūr (Vide M. G., 72, foot-note 4)

† Ibid., 70 ff

‡ T. Y., 250-51. That the amount is rather exaggerated admits of no doubt

§ These rivers are in modern Kāfiristān

with most of his men, that of the Nūr valley adopted a hostile attitude, but had to bow before the might and means of Mahmūd. The people of these valleys worshipped the lion and were apparently Buddhists who worshipped the Sākiya Sinha (lion), the Buddha. Mahmūd appointed a number of teachers to acquaint them with the rudiments of Islām and returned to Ghaznīn *

At the end of the year 1019 A. C. Mahmūd marched against the Afghāns,† who inhabited the region between Ghaznīn and the Indus. He inflicted a most severe chastisement on the Afghāns who used to make raids into the frontier towns of the Ghaznawid Empire and had become so daring as to waylay the Imperial forces on their way back from Kānauj. It is said that very few, except women and children, escaped the terrible execution ordered by the Sultān.

Subuktigīn had promised Shams-ul-Ma'ālī Abul Hasan Qābūs bin Washm-gīr bin Ziyār to restore his kingdom (Jurjān and Tabaristān) to him, but died before fulfilling the promise. Mahmūd wanted to do what was left undone by his father on account of his death, but accomplished nothing. Qābūs was, however, able to occupy Jurjān in August, 998 A. C. and to

* Z A , 78-79

† They were neither Ghilzais nor Ghurids as erroneously supposed by some scholars (See M G , 76, f n 1)

establish his sway over Tabaristān and Jibāl. He was not destined to enjoy a long reign. He was deposed by the army and his son, Minūchīhr, was raised to the throne. Mahmūd took up the cause of Dārā, another son of Qābūs, who had quarrelled with his father and taken refuge at Ghaznīn. But Minūchīhr disarmed his opposition by recognizing him as his suzerain and promising to pay 50,000 *dīnārs* annually as tribute. A little later Mahmūd married one of his daughters to him. Once, when the fall of Ray created misgivings in his mind, Minūchīhr adopted a defiant attitude, but made ample apologies and paid a fine of 500,000 *dīnārs* to appease his overlord.*

The rulers of Mekrān were the feudatories of the Buwaihids. After the fall of the Buwaihids, one of them, viz., Ma'dān, acknowledged Subuktigīn as his suzerain. On Subuktigīn's death he renewed allegiance to his successor, Mahmūd. On his own death one of his sons, named 'Isā, defeated the other, called Abul Mu'askar, and forced him to seek shelter in Sīstān. Mahmūd was at that time away in India on his expedition against Somnāth. On his return to Ghaznīn when Abul Mu'askar waited upon him, he treated him with kindness. Lest the Sultān should raise Abul Mu'askar to the throne, 'Isā acknowledged Mahmūd as his overlord. He was

-with the
rulers of
Mekrān.

* T Y, 278-80 and 283, and T M, 245-46

then called upon to provide maintenance for his brother and was confirmed in the government² of Mekkân. Towards the close of Mahmūd's reign when he was harassed by the Saljūqs, 'Isā declared his independence, which was ensured for some time on account of Mahmūd's death.

On the death of Fakhr-ud-Daulah, the Buwaihīd ruler of Ray, his widow was allowed to govern his dominions as a regent of his minor son, Majd-ud-Daulah. Mahmūd was too clever to risk his reputation by leading his forces against a defenceless widow. This magnanimity was not, however, extended to her son when he grew to manhood and assumed the reins of kingship on the death of his mother. His reign was a continuous scene of misgovernment. Terrorized by the Dailamite troops, he invoked the aid of Sultān Mahmūd. The Sultān, who was waiting for such an opportunity, immediately sent an army under the command of Hājib 'Alī who took him captive and sent him to Ghaznīn, from where he was sent to India. Then followed a ruthless persecution of the Carmāthians, Bātinīs and Mu'tazilites and a wholesale destruction of their literature^{*}. The chiefs of the neighbouring places came forward and owed allegiance to him. But the ruler of Abhar, Sarjahān, Shahrāzūr and Zanjān†, named

^{*} See *Z. A.*, 91, *K. T.*, ix, 262, and *M. G.*, 83.

[†] For the locality of these places, vide *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, by G. Le Strange, p. 221.

Ibrāhīm *bin* Marzubān of Dailam, generally known as "Sālār", had the audacity enough to incur the displeasure of Mahmūd by refusing to owe allegiance to him. His destruction was therefore decided upon and a large army was sent against him under the command of an old rival of his, called Marzubān *bin* Hasan, who had sought shelter with the Sultān, to punish him for his patriotism. Forming an alliance with some of the leading chiefs of the Dailamites, Marzubān marched against his rival and captured Qazwīn without experiencing much opposition. Meanwhile, Mahmūd returned to his capital and, availing himself of his absence, the Sālār emerged from his retreat, inflicted on his rival a sharp defeat and occupied Qazwīn. Prince Mas'ūd, who was placed in charge of the new province and entrusted with the task of reducing the remaining parts of the Buwāhid territory, opened his regime by leading an expedition against him in conjunction with Marzubān. He laid siege to the stronghold where the Sālār had taken shelter, but the garrison held out heroically and frustrated the efforts of the besiegers. Failing to take the fort by storm, Mas'ūd resorted to underhand means and achieved his object: Holding out high hopes to some of the responsible officers of the Sālār and thus winning them over to his side, he acquainted himself with the vulnerable point of the fort and commenced operations in right earnest. Finding himself betrayed by his own officers, the gallant Sālār came out of his fort

and made a desperate charge on the besiegers. He was, however, defeated and taken prisoner. His son offered submission and promised to pay tribute. Mas'ūd next attacked and occupied Hamadān after inflicting a defeat on the deputy of 'Alā-ud-Daulah *bin* Kākawāh. The turn of Isfahān came next. 'Alā-ud-Daulah was allowed to retain it at the recommendation of the Khālifa of Baghdād on the condition that he would pay a sum of 20,000 *dīnārs* annually as tribute. Meanwhile, Mahmūd breathed his last (30th April, 1030 A. C.) and Mas'ūd marched to Nishāpur to make a bid for the throne †

* His full name was Abu Ja'far Muḥammad *bin* Dushmanziyar and was also known as simply Ibn Kākawāh. The famous philosopher Abū 'Alī Sīnā (Avicenna) flourished at his court under his patronage (*K. T.*, iv, 279, and *Tārīkh-ul-Hukamā*, by Al-Qifī, pp 419-26).

† *K. T.*, iv, 262-63 and 279, *T. M.*, 11-25 and 359, *T. N.*, 87. Baihaqī also states that Mas'ūd was left at Ray with an ill-equipped army of only 2,000 (*T. M.*, 258).

CHAPTER III

SULTAN MAHMUD THE GREAT—II

HIS INVASIONS OF INDIA

Alptigin and his successors had led a number of expeditions against the frontier towns of India and Subuktigin had 'fought numerous battles' with Rāja Jaipāl of Waihind (modern Hund) and extended his kingdom as far as Lamghān. It was left for Mahmūd to continue the forward policy of his father and to carry his conquests far into the interior of India. When the Khalīfa of Baghdād recognized him as an independent ruler in 999 A. C. 'he made it incumbent upon himself to lead an expedition against India every year.* In pursuance of this resolution he led not less than seventeen expeditions against India and it must be recorded to his credit that in none of them he suffered a defeat †

* This is what 'Utbi says (T Y, 134) The translation of this passage in *E & D* (Vol 11, p 24) is inaccurate, and it has misled many in that it implies that Mahmūd took a *vow* to undertake a *holy war* against Hind every year and casts a halo of *Jihād* on or rather gives a touch of religious fanaticism to what were purely secular exploits (*Vide* Chapter IV)

† The accounts of Mahmūd's seventeen (not twelve, as erroneously stated by some historians) expeditions against India, as given in the contemporary chronicles and later histories, are materially discrepant Their number and dates differ in different accounts, the

The first of his Indian expeditions was directed against the frontier towns and forts of the Khyber Pass in the month of September, 1000 A C. It resulted in the capture of several places. Having entrusted the government of the newly conquered territory to an able officer, Mahmūd returned to Ghaznī with as much booty as he was able to collect.

Jaipāl, the Rāja of Waihind, whom Subuktigīn had twice defeated and reduced to submission, was no longer friendly. Muhammad bin 'Alī, the reputed author of the *Majma-ul-Ansāb*, informs us that after the death of Amīr Subuktigīn, Rāja Jaipāl tried to win back what

spoils obtained by the Sultān in each of them have been variously estimated—in some so exaggerated as to stagger our imagination—and the names of persons and places are too often corrupted, confused and carelessly recorded by the scribes. I have exercised the greatest care in reconciling these conflicting and even contradictory accounts and tried to be accurate as far as possible.

Gardīzī is the only contemporary chronicler who makes a mention of this expedition. Ferīšta and Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad are the two later historians who have reproduced it in their works. They seem to have drawn upon Gardīzī's *Zain-ul-Akhbār*, but both of them have made some mistakes in copying it. Sir W. Haig (*C H I*, 111, 13) regards this expedition as 'apocryphal' without assigning any good reasons. It was not made much of by the contemporary chroniclers obviously because it was a comparatively minor expedition, confined only to the frontier towns of India.

the Amīr had conquered from him and attacked Mahmūd, who set out from Ghaznīn at the head of his army to repel the invasion.* The army of the Rāja is said to have consisted of 30,000 foot, 12,000 horse and 300 elephants. The two armies encamped in the neighbourhood of Peshāwar and in a fierce fight that took place between them on the 27th of November, 1001 A. C., the Hindūs were defeated and put to flight. Their Rāja, with fifteen of his sons and grandsons, was made captive and sent to 'a slave market' in Khurāsān and sold there for 80 *dīnārs* † The spoils were 'beyond

* *Majma-ul-Ansāb* quoted by Dr M Nāzım in *M G*, 87, foot-note 1

† The original word of which the English equivalent is taken to be 'a market' is *Man-Yasid*, which has puzzled a number of competent scholars. On the authority of the MSS of the *Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri*, Raverty assures us that 'nearly every copy' has the word '*Man-Yasid*'. While translating the relevant passage, Sir H Elliot (*E & D*, 11, 270) has erroneously written 'Yazd' for '*Man-Yasid*'. On the authority of the MSS of the *Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri*, Raverty calls it '*Man-Yasid*', and relying on the MS of a *qasida* of 'Unsurī, Dr M Nāzım calls it *Mīrand*. Both these scholars have taken it to be the name of a place. This is perhaps because it is followed by the word Khurāsān in the original text. On the authority of the *Ghiyās-ul-Lughāt* and the *Māyyad-ul-Fusālā*, Professor Hodivala (*S. I. M. H*, xiii-xiv and 191-93) takes it to mean 'a market, an auction, and an auctioneering room' and, after discussing the point at length, comes to the conclusion that "Jayapāla was publicly exposed at one of the slave-auctions in some market in Khurāsān, just like thousands of other Hindū captives". His conclusion is confirmed by Isāmī, the author of the *Futūh-us-Salātīn*, a metrical history of Mediæval India (1000-1349 A C.),

all bounds of calculation'. They included, *inter alia*, sixteen* precious necklaces of pearls, one of which was of 'enormous value.' The Rāja was restored to his kingdom on the conditions that he would pay 250,000 *dinārs* as ransom and give fifty elephants. Jaipāl was then allowed to go to his capital; but in order to ensure the fulfilment of the conditions of the peace-treaty, the Sultān detained two princes, a son and a grandson of the Rāja, as hostages. After spending the winter months at Wāhind and reducing the neighbouring places, Mahmūd returned to Ghaznī in the spring of the same year. Humiliated by repeated reverses, the Rāja sank low in the eyes of his subjects 'who refused to

written in 1350 A. C. century and recently lighted upon and published by Dr Mahdī Husain of Agra. The relevant verses are —

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| نک حمل امواج هندو شکست | فتادش هه'ن رائے چيپال دست |
| مرورا ناقصائے عربیہ سرود | بدل نارار برده سپرد |
| شیدم نرمان فرما روا | پشتاد دیار چيپال را |
| مقیم نارار نرو حقد | پائیش نهار در اندو حقد |

In view of all this, it is impossible to agree with Dr M. Nazim who says that "the sale of Jaipāl meant only the fixing of his ransom" (*M. G.*, 87). The object of Mahmūd seems to have been to intimidate the Rāja so that he might yield to his demands unconditionally.

* Dr M. Nazim erroneously gives the number of the necklaces captured as 'fifteen' (*M. G.*, 87). One necklace, which was of 'enormous value', was taken from the Rāja himself and fifteen from his relatives. Hence sixteen is the correct number (*T. F.*, 1, 24).

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of Islām.* When he left for Ghaznīn he suffered great losses on the way, in the first place because the Indus was in flood and it exacted a heavy toll, and secondly because Abūl Fateh Dāūd, the ruler of Multān blocked the passage of his army through his territories and augmented its sufferings † Thus after suffering many hardships and sustaining many losses, the Sultān reached Ghaznīn about the middle of 1005 A. C.

Shaikh Hamīd Lawī‡ had cultivated friendly relations with Amīr Subuktigin (4) Multān and thus secured his position in Sind and Multān. But his grandson, Abul Fateh Dāūd bin Nasīr, reversed this cautious policy and gave offence to Sultān Māhmūd by embracing the Carmāthian creed, entering

* *Ibid*, and *T. Y.*, 210 Note that conversion precedes preaching and propaganda

† *K. T.*, 18, 149

‡ Ferishta (*T. F.*, 1, 24) has erroneously written 'Lodī' and the error has been repeated by Sir W. Haig (*C. H. I.*, 11, 14), Professor M. Habib (*S. M. G.*, 23) and others despite the fact that it was fully exploded by Raverty long ago (*Mihran*, 325 note) "Lodī" is a miswriting of Lawī who, according to Mas'ūdī, was one of the ancestors of Dāūd (*M. Z.*, 234, 385) Mas'ūdī is supported by many other authorities and they all agree that the rulers of Multān were the descendants of one Usama bin Lawī bin Ghalib The Lodīs were Afghāns, and according to Raverty, "there were no Lodīs nor Lodī rulers in Multān at this time nor centuries afterwards" (See *M. G.*, 95, foot-note 5, and *S. I. M. H.*, 141)

into an alliance with the Rāja of Bhātīya and attacking the Ghaznawid army on its return-march after the conquest of Bhātīya.* Thus enraged, Sultān Mahmūd set out from Ghaznī in the spring of 1006 A C and launched his next expedition against the ruler of Multān. The direct route to Multān being risky because it was not safe to cross the Indus lower down, the Sultān proposed to pass through Anandpal's territories and cross the river near Peshāwar, but was opposed by the forces of the Rāja. After defeating the Rāja and driving him into the hills of Kashmīr, he resumed his march to Multān. Not willing to court destruction in an open battle, Dāūd shut himself up in the fort and defended his position for a week, after which he sued for peace † Imposing a tribute of 20,000 golden *dirhams* per year on

* Ferishta simply says that Dāūd had annoyed Mahmūd by his unbecoming behaviour (T F, 1, 25)

† According to 'Utbī, he (Dāūd) determined to load all his property on elephants and carry it off to Sarandīb, and he left Multān empty " (E & D., II, 31) This is a most preposterous statement. It has given rise to many surmises and speculations, some of which are no less amazing. Raverty identified Sarandīb with Kachh Bhuj (Mīhrān, 325 note). Professor Hodivala suggests the name of "Debal-Sind" and says that it "would appear to be a more plausible restoration" (S I-M H, 141). Dr. M. Nāzīm says that he (Dāūd) "fled to an island in the Indus" (M G, 97). In view of the fact that the garrison defended the fort for seven days (Z A, 67), the flight of Dāūd is improbable. Had he fled away, the garrison would have submitted without resistance.

Dāūd and exacting promises of future allegiance, good faith and abjuration of heretical beliefs, Mahmūd marched back to Ghaznīn, leaving Sukhpāl, alias Nawāsa Shāh, in charge of the campaign against the outlying parts of Multān. He would have taken a decisive step against Dāūd and completed the subjugation of the entire province of Multān, but had to content himself with the terms stated above because hardly had he won victory when he received the news of the invasion of his homelands by Ilak Khān, the King of Kāshghar.

Taking advantage of Mahmūd's troubles,
 (5) Bhātiya Nawāsa Shāh† apostatized and
 declared himself independent
 Such a conduct on his part was bound to bring

Dr M Nāzim, on the authority of Guẓidah (T G, 397) says that Sukhpāl was left in "charge of the government of Multān" (M G, 98) and Sir W Haig says that he was appointed governor of Und (Wahind) but does not specify his authority (C H I, iii, 15). In view of the fact that a peace was concluded with Dāūd, it is wrong to say that Sukhpāl was entrusted with the government of Multān. Haig seems to have followed Ferishta (T F, i, 25) a little carelessly. All that Ferishta says is that Sukhpāl was left in charge of the *campaign* against Bhatinda (Dhātiya).

† He was a grandson of Rāja Jaipāl, who had been left as a hostage with Subuktigin and who is said to have been taken prisoner and converted to Islām by Abū 'Alī Sīmjūrī after the defeat of Mahmūd at Nishāpur (Z A, 69). He was called Nawās Shāh because he was the *Nawāsa* (grandson) of the *Shāh* (Jaipāl of the Hindūshāhiya Dynasty).

on him the usual punishment. The danger from Kashghar being over, Mahmūd advanced at the head of his army early in the year 1008 A C and attacked him. Nawāsa Shāh was defeated, dispossessed of 400,000 *dirhams*, which he had accumulated, and thrown into prison for the rest of his life *

Anandpāl, who had allied himself with
(6) Punjāb Dāūd, the ruler of Multān, and blocked the passage of the Muslim army through his territory, now sent ambassadors on all sides and invoked the assistance of the neighbouring princes of Hindustān for stemming the rising tide of the Muslim conquest. Among those who readily responded to his request were the Rājas of Ujjain, Gwālior, Kālinjar, Kanauj, Delhi and Ajmer, all of whom joined him in his invasion of the Ghaznawid Kingdom. This was the first Hindū confederacy formed against Mahmūd and to overthrow it was no easy task.† Trilochanpāl,‡ son of Anandpāl, was entrusted with the

* Z A , 69, T Y , 223 ; and T F , 1, 26.

† Ferishta alone is responsible for making a mention of this confederacy (T. F , 1, 26) In the list of the confederates he includes the Rājas of Delhi and Ajmer as well, but it is contended that Delhi and Ajmer were not founded at that time (See M G , 89, foot-note 3, and *Indian Antiquary*, xxvi, 162).

‡ Dr M, Nazīm, following 'Utbī (E & D , n. 33) calls him Brahmanpāl, which is an error. (See S I-M H., 133).

command of the combined forces of the Rājas and directed to advance towards Peshāwar. These forces were further swelled on the way by the enlistment of 'the wild and warlike' Gakhars. So great was the national excitement among the Hindūs on this occasion that they spared nothing to destroy the neighbouring Muslim kingdom root and branch. Those who were poor gave ample proof of their patriotism by contributing as much as they could from their meagre earnings. Even their women are said to have sold their jewellery and gold ornaments in order to augment the resources of war. On receiving the news of this Hindū invasion, Mahmūd marched out on the 31st of December, 1008 A C, crossed the Indus and reached the plain opposite Waihind. This time Mahmūd observed that unlike before the Hindūs had sunk their differences and pooled their resources for national defence. He was highly impressed by the devotion of the Hindūs and their women. When the battle began, the bare-headed and bare-footed Gakhars, armed with spears and swords, appeared on the scene, rushed into the thick of the fight and killed a large number of Muslims. The prudence and personal prowess of the Sultān, coupled with a piece of good luck, turned the tables against the Hindūs. When the fury of the Hindū attack abated and the Hindūs were exhausted, the Argus-eyed Mahmūd sent his personal guards to sweep round and make a sudden attack on the rear of the Hindū army. This was done

and, while effecting a partial change of front to repulse the attack, the Hindū ranks ran riot and in a state of confusion they took to flight. Mahmūd won the day and a large amount of booty, including thirty elephants, fell into his hands. The dispersal of the Hindū hordes opened the way for further penetration by revealing the weakness of the Indian military system.

(7) Capture of Nagarkot
 Mahmūd next marched to the fort of Nagarkot, situated near Kāngra on the summit of a hill and surrounded by the river Bagangā. The fort was a place of great sanctity, because it had a temple, which stood high in the estimation of the people and enjoyed a wide reputation as the repository of most of the wealth of the neighbouring Rājas. Mahmūd laid siege to it and the garrison surrendered it after three days "heroic defence." The spoils obtained were 'beyond the limit of calculation'. Among other precious things, they included a vast amount of gold and silver ingot, costly apparel, a profusely decorated throne and a house of silver.* Even after making considerable allowance for exaggeration, the fact cannot escape recognition that the spoils were colossal, so much so that envoys from different countries flocked to

* 'Utbi has given a graphic description of this 'house of silver'. From it we can safely infer that it was a folding pavilion made of silver, chiefly meant for use in royal journeys and progresses. It was not a silver throne as 'Unsuri would have us believe (See S I-M H, 143)

Ghaznīn when that wealth was being displayed there. Placing the fort in charge of his own officers, the Sultān returned to Ghaznīn in the middle of the year 1009 A. C. After his departure Anandpāl managed to re-establish his sway in the Salt Range, with Nandāna as his capital

In 1009 A. C. Mahmūd invaded India again. This time he attacked Narāyan or (7) Narāyan Narāyanpur⁺ and inflicted a stunning defeat on its Rāja. After capturing and plundering the town, he returned to his capital. Some time later the agents of the Rāja waited upon him with proposals of a permanent peace and 'their good wishes for his future prosperity.' According to the terms of the peace-treaty that was then concluded, the Rāja offered to pay a yearly tribute and fifty elephants and to send 2,000 soldiers to serve in the Ghaznawīd army. Mahmūd was pleased to accept these terms. The peace is believed to have given a great encouragement to trade between India and K̄hurāsān. Politically, this expedition opened the way to the heart of Hindūstān and the Sultān could now march through Narāyanpur and attack the Rājas beyond

⁺ Cunningham identified it with Narāyanpur in Alwar State (See his *Ancient Geography*, pp 338-44, and *A S I*, Vol II, pp 242-47 and Vol VI, pp 91-93) Of all the contemporary chroniclers, 'Utbi alone has mentioned this expedition in his book He does not give the date but places it between the expeditions to Bhīmāgar (Nagarkot) and Ghūr

Taking advantage of the invasion of Khurāsān by Ilak Khān and of Mahmūd's absence, Abul Fateh Dāūd, the ruler of Multān, renounced allegiance to the Sultān and declared his independence. Mahmūd's next expedition was, therefore, directed against him. It was undertaken in October, 1010 A. C. This time Dāūd was taken prisoner and sent to Ghaznīn and confined in the fort of Ghūrak * Multān was completely subjugated and annexed to Ghaznīn. After appointing a governor there, Mahmūd marched back to Ghaznīn.

In 1012 A. C. Mahmūd proposed to march from Ghaznīn with the object of capturing Thānesar, which was then one of the most famous shrines of India, renowned for the age-long riches accumulated in its vaults. On learning of his intention, Anandpāl† sent his men to Ghaznīn to request Mahmūd to take fifty elephants from him every year and impose an annual tribute on the people of that place.

* 'Ghūrak or Ghorak (جوراك) is situated about fifty miles north-west of Qandhār' (*M. G.*, 99, n. 3). In the *Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭa* (i, 27) it is written as جوراك. It appears that ج has been left out by the scribe, for Ghūr was conquered a year later (1011 A. C.)

† Dr. Nāẓim calls him Trilochanpāl, which is wrong, because 'the Thānesar campaign was undertaken during the life of Anandpāl' (*S. M. G.*, 32, n. 14 and *T. F.*, i, 27). Sir W. Haig erroneously calls him Jaipāl II (*C. H. I.*, iii, 17—18).

and spare it because it had an idol called *Chakraswāmīn*,¹ to which the Hindūs were so devoutly attached. The Sultān declined the offer and ordered the Rāja to allow full and free passage to his forces through his territory. The Rāja could not but obey, but at the same time he warned the Rāja of Thānesar about the impending danger. On receipt of this timely information the Rāja of Thānesar sought and secured the support of the neighbouring princes. But before the clumsy machinery of the Indian confederacy could move, Mahmūd marched through the Punjāb, defeated on the way a Rāja called Rām, who opposed his advance near the Sutlej, and reached Thānesar. At his approach, the Rāja took to flight, leaving the *Chakraswāmīn* to take care of itself. The invader entered the town without encountering opposition, because it was found in an undefended position. A vast booty, together with a large number of captives and the idol *Chakraswāmīn*, was transported to Ghaznīn †

¹ T F, i, 27 *Chakrāsūwāmīn* means "The Lord of the Wheel." It was a bronze image of Vishnū, which held the weapon, called *Chakra*, in one of its hands. (See Sachao, i, 117, and Z A, 70)

† 'Utbī places the invasion of Thanesar after that of Nandana. He does not give the date and therefore seems to have made a mistake. Elliot follows him in the error to mislead many others, including Dr M Nāzīm (M G, 91 and 103) and Sir W Haig (C H I, iii, 17). The expedition against Thānesar was undertaken during the lifetime of Anandpāl and therefore the one against Nandana, which

Trilochanpāl,* the Rāja of Nandana,† “was personally well inclined towards (10) Nandana. the Mussalmāns, but he seems to have been a weak man and the direction of affairs came into the hands of his son, known to contemporaries as the ‘Nīdar’ (Fearless) Bhīm, who stoutly reversed the policy of his grandfather and put an end to the Ghaznavid alliance.”‡ In order to keep his way clear to India, Mahmūd marched against Nandana in the autumn of 1013 A. C. but abandoned the expedition owing to a heavy snow-fall. In the following spring (1014 A. C.) the Ghaznavids set out again, “ascending the hills like mountain-goats and descending them like torrents of water” On hearing of Mahmūd’s advance, Trilochanpāl entrusted the defence of the fort to his son, Bhīmpāl, and himself retired to the Kashmīr Pass, presumably with the object of enlisting the support of Sangramārāja, the ruler of Kashmīr. On his arrival, Mahmūd laid siege to the fort and, after some days’ futile fighting, succeeded in drawing out a detachment of Bhīmpāl into the plain and putting it to the

was directed against his son, could not have preceded it Gardīzī (Z A, 70) places it in 1011–12 A C, which seems to be correct Ferishta adheres to the correct order (T F, 1, 27-28) I have followed Gardīzī and Ferishta

* Sir W Haig (C H I, III, 17) calls him Jaipāl II which is wrong

† It is called Nardīn by ‘Utbi and Nandūnah by Baihaqi and Gardīzī It is situated in the Salt-Range.

‡ See S. M G, 34

sword. On receipt of fresh reinforcements, Bhīmpāl appeared in the plain and attacked the invaders, but was beaten back. The Hindūs took to flight to find refuge in the fort of Nandana. The fort was besieged and the garrison sought safety in submission. After placing a garrison in Nandana, Mahmūd pushed on in pursuit of Trilochanpāl, defeated him in a valley to the north of Jhelum and received the submission of "numerous Rājas of the neighbourhood." Leaving Sārūgh as governor of Nandana and possessing himself of immense booty, Mahmūd returned to Ghaznīn.

In 1015 A. C. the Sultān started from Ghaznīn at the head of his army and proposed to penetrate into Kashmīr, (11) Kashmīr probably with the object of punishing Sangramārāja for helping Trilochanpāl. He, however, failed to storm the fort of Lohkot.* After reducing the neighbouring regions, he abandoned the enterprise and returned. On his way back his soldiers lost their way, with the result that many of them perished in the extensive morasses that blocked their passage. This expedition against Kashmīr was followed by another in 1021 A. C., but that too suffered the fate of its predecessor and the Sultān finally gave up the idea of conquering Kashmīr.†

* Kalhāna and Gardīzī call it Lohkot and Lohārkotta respectively. Both these names mean 'The Iron Fort'. It is identified with modern Loharīn. (M. G., 104, f. n 6).

† Z. A., 79

The twelfth expedition was undertaken with a view to penetrate right into the interior of the Indian Continent. (12) Baran. In 1018 A. C. the Sultān set out at the head of a huge army, recruited chiefly from Central Asia. Passing through the Punjāb, crossing the Jumna and capturing all the forts and fortified places, including Sirsāwa,* that blocked his passage, he reached Baran (modern Bulandshehr), whose governor, Hara Datta, tendered submission and embraced Islām along with his 10,000 men. From there Mahmūd marched to Mahāban,† situated in the Muttra District (U. P.), whose chief, Kul Chand,‡ also submitted without offering any

* For the origin and antiquity of Sirsāwa, see *A S I.*, xiv, 79

† Gardīzī calls it Mahāwan and 'Unsurī calls it Mahāwīn. It is situated six miles east of Muttra on the left bank of the Jumna. (See *S I-M H.*, 146).

‡ Kul Chand is said to have been only a 'governor' of the fort (*C H. I.*, iii, 19). This is incorrect. 'Utbī's reference to him that he was "a Satanic leader, who had assumed superiority over all other rulers, defeated, put to flight everyone he had fought with and possessed a great army, numerous elephants and strong forts which were secure from attack and capture" militates against the theory that he was but a 'governor' and conclusively shows that he was one of the greatest and strongest rulers of his day—a conclusion which is also confirmed by the fact that in the battle he fought with Mahmūd as many as 50,000 of his soldiers were slain and not less than 150 of his elephants were captured after his defeat. Ferishta (*T F.*, i, 29) calls him a Rāja. Professor Hodivala suggests that Kul Chand was none other than Kalla Chīd (See *S I-M. H.*, 146-47).

resistance. A quarrel having arisen between the soldiers of the Sultān and those of Kul Chand, a number of Hīndūs were slain; and the staggering chief, finding himself betrayed, slew his wife and children and stabbed himself to death with a dagger. A large booty, including 185 elephants, fell into the hands of the Muslims. Mahmūd resumed his march and advanced against the great ecclesiastical city of Muttra, the birth-place of the deified hero, Srī Krishna, which was studded with shrines, blazing with gems and jewels. Having successfully entered that city and collected a vast booty, including 'a sapphire of 450 *musqāls*'[†] and 5 idols of

[†] This sapphire is said to have weighed 450 *musqāls*, i. e. 32,400 grs = about 4 $\frac{2}{3}$ lbs Avoirdupois or 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ lbs Troy. Critics like Sir W. Haig and Dr M. Nāzīm are stumped by this statement. The former says that 'it is difficult to believe stories of a sapphire weighing over 16 pounds and a half', (*C. H. I.*, III, 19) and the latter asserts that 450 *musqāls* 'is an impossible weight for a precious stone' (*M. G.*, 108, f. n. 3). This may be true, but what is the guarantee that the stone in question was really a sapphire as modern mineralogists would understand the term? Despite the rapid strides of science, it is not easy even to-day to place a precious stone in its proper class and experts differ in their opinions even after subjecting it to chemical, microscopic, optical and other scientific tests. When the eye was the only criterion of the old lapidaries, how much more must have it been difficult and uncertain to judge a precious stone? The possibility, therefore, is that an ordinary stone might have been mistaken for a sapphire. Sir W. Haig says that it weighed 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Since he cites no authority, it may be dismissed as a miscalculation. (See *S. I. M. H.*, 148-49).

pure gold,* he proceeded towards Kanauj, a great citadel of Hindūstān, and appeared before its walls early in 1019 A. C. The descriptions of the grandeur of the city and of the splendour of its Court, as given by Hindū and Muslim chroniclers, stagger our belief. It contained seven forts and ten thousand temples. Its army consisted of eighty-thousand men in armour, thirty-thousand horsemen and five hundred thousand infantry. Notwithstanding this overwhelming strength at his disposal, Rājyapāl's† heart melted after a short and feeble resistance and he sought safety in flight. Mahmūd entered the seven forts, and seized the wealth treasured there.

After the capture of Kanauj Mahmūd marched to Munj,‡ a strongly garrisoned fort, well-

* Sir W Haig's estimate of the gold yielded by these idols is 548 lbs (*C H I*, iii, 19). This again is without authority. 'Utbi informs us that it was 98,300 *misqāls* i. e., 1010 lbs Avoirdupois. (See *S I-M. H*, 149).

† He is called Jai Chand by Sir W Haig (*C H I*, iii, 19). Professor Hodivala dismisses it as 'wrong' and calls him Rājyapāl. He supports his contention by citing evidence from inscriptions etc (*S I-M. H*, 149). 'Utbi calls him Rājpal.

‡ Elliot identified this place with Majhāwan, some ten miles south of Kānpur or Cawnpore (*E. & D*, ii, 458). Dr. Vost was of opinion that it corresponded to Manaich, which is said to have been the old name of the modern town of Zafarābād, situated near Jaunpur. (*J R A S*, 1905). His hypothesis is followed by Sir W. Haig in *The Cambridge History of India* (Vol. iii, p 20). Dr M Nāzīm differs from them and, while stating that Mahmūd

equipped with supplies, and laid siege to it. Within a fortnight the defenders were driven to such despair that they first slew their women-folk and children and then rushed out into the field with swords in their hands and fell fighting in the field¹ From Munj Mahmūd marched to another fort, called Asai,[†] which was defended by deep ditches and a dense jungle. The chief of the fort, Chandar Pāl Bhūr,[‡] took to flight at the approach of the invader who took possession of it without difficulty. After the occupation of Asai, Mahmūd marched westwards and entered a town called Sharwaṣ without encountering opposition because its ruler, Chandar Rāi, had

attacked this and other forts on his way back to Ghaznīn, adds that it was situated 14 miles north of Etāwah (M G, 109)

¹ This rite was known as *Jauhar*. It was performed by the Rājput̃s when thrown in critical circumstances with the object of preventing their women and children from falling into the hands of their enemies.

[†] Elliot identified this fort with a town called Asnī, 10 miles north-east of Fatehpur (*E & D*, II, 458). Dr Vost located it in the neighbourhood of Munj or Manaich (*J R A S*, 1905). Dr M Nāzīm identifies it with Asai (Ghāt), six miles west of Etāwah (M G, 109).

[‡] *T Y*, 310. Ibn-ul-Asīr (*K. T*, IX, 186) and Ferishtā (*T F*, I, 30) call him simply Chandpāl.

§ Elliot identified Sharwa with Sriswāgarh on the Pahūj or with Seunrā on the Ken. (*E & D*, II, 459). Sir W Haig follows him (*C H. I*, III, 20). Dr M Nāzīm would have us believe that it corresponded to Sarāwa, some thirteen miles due south of Meerut (M G 109).

left it to the mercy of the invader and gone into a forest with his army and treasure Mahmūd pursued him thither, defeated him and dispossessed him of his wealth. This was the crowning exploit of a most laborious campaign, after which Mahmūd returned to Ghaznīn with enormous wealth and a large number of captives.

The cowardly conduct of Rājyapāla, the Rāja of Kanauj, earned him the enmity of the neighbouring Rājas who formed a league against him with Ganda,* the Chandela Rāja of Kālinjar, as their head. The allied forces were put under the command of the Chandela crown-prince, Vidhyādhāra, and sent against Rājyapāl of Kanauj to punish him for his pusillanimity. Rājyapāl was killed in battle and probably his son, Trilochanpāl,† was placed on the vacant throne. Flushed with this victory, Ganda entered into an alliance with Trilochanpāl, son of Anandpāl, and promised to help him in winning back his ancestral kingdom from Sultān Mahmūd.‡ On receipt of information about these events, Mahmūd made up his mind to march against the Chandela prince and his

* Some historians call him Nanda, but Ganda is the correct name.

† He is said to have been a son of Rājyapāl (*O H. I.*, 383).

‡ *Z. A.*, 76, and *K T.*, ix, 218.

accomplices and to teach them a lesson. In the autumn of 1019 A. C. he left Ghaznīn with a firm determination to retaliate the assassination of his vassal, Rājyapāl, and to deal a death-blow to the league that had been formed against him and was now contemplating to overthrow the Ghaznawid power in the Punjāb. On hearing of his approach, Trilochanpāl of Lāhore proceeded south to join forces with his namesake of Kanauj. Mahmūd pursued him post-haste and overtook him near the river Ruhut.¹ The Rāja managed to cross the river and sent a detachment to prevent the enemy from crossing it. Encouraged by their leader's promise of "a life of repose after that day of trouble", the Muslims plunged into the river and landed on the other side of it 'without the loss of a single life.' Marshalling his forces in battle array, Mahmūd inflicted a sharp defeat on his opponents and obtained enormous booty, including many elephants. The Rāja, though wounded in the battle, managed to escape and sought shelter with the Chandela Rāja of Kālnjar. The turn of Ganda therefore came next. He was awaiting the invader with a huge army, consisting of 36,000 horse, 145,000 foot and 640 elephants. Ascending an eminence with a view to reconnoitre the position of the Hindū army, Mahmūd saw 'an imposing panorama of camps, pavilions and embankments and he regretted

¹ The river Rāmganga is known as Ruhut (Rāhīb) in its lower courses (*I G I*, xvi, 175)

having ventured so far.' In this hour of distress and disappointment he prostrated himself on the ground and sought divine aid, which never failed him. In the evening the Muslims fought a successful engagement with a detachment of the Rāja and in the morning they were told that the Hindūs had deserted the camp. Stricken with panic, the Rāja seems to have taken to flight in the guise of night. All the valuables, which the Hindūs had left behind, were taken possession of and the Rāja was pursued to some distance, but he managed to make good his escape, though many of his men were captured or killed. Thereafter, Mahmūd marched back to Ghaznī. On the way 580 elephants, belonging to Ganda, happened to fall into his hands.*

(14) Punjab The opposition of Trilochanpāl, the Rāja of Lahore, to the forces of Sultān Mahmūd in the expedition against Kālinjar furnished a good ground for invading his kingdom. In 1021 A. C. Mahmūd appeared in India again and inflicted a crushing defeat on Bhīmpāl who had succeeded his father, Trilochanpāl, in the meantime. The Rāja took shelter with the ruler of Ajmer and died there in 1026 A. C. †

* Z A, 77

† T F, 1, 31 Dr M Nāzım (M G, 96, n 1) does not seem to be justified in criticising Sir W Haig's statement that "he (Bhīmpāl) fled and sought an asylum with the Chauhān rāja of Ajmer" (C H I, III, 22). He is, however, right in saying that Bhīmpāl succeeded to the diminished dominions of his father and died in 1026

With him the Hindūshāhiya Dynasty came to an end. The results of this expedition were more enduring than those of others. The Punjāb was cleared and annexed to the Ghaznawid Empire. A regular Amīr was entrusted with the government of the province with his head-quarters at Lāhore, and garrisons were stationed at important places.

Next year Mahmūd marched against Ganda
 (15) Gwālīor who was still strong enough to defy
 and Kālinjar the authority of the Sultān. He
 first laid siege to and stormed the
 'impregnable' fort of Gwālīor; and after receiving
 the submission of its chief, called Arjan, who was
 a feudatory of Ganda, he proceeded towards Kā-
 linjar, the stronghold of the Chandela Rāja, and
 surrounded it on all sides, so that all approaches
 to the fort were closed. Finding himself
 in a perilous situation, Ganda purchased safety
 by offering submission without resistance. Having
 obtained enormous amount of wealth, Mahmūd
 concluded a peace-treaty with the Rāja and went
 back to Ghaznīn, laden with riches Both
 Ferishta and Nizām-ud-Dīn Ahmad say that, in
 order to please the Sultān, the Rāja composed a
 flattering verse in Hindī and sent it to his over-
 lord who, in return, rewarded him with a robe
 of honour and conferred upon him the

A C (M G, 95-96). In his presence, however insignificant his power might have been, a Muslim governor of the Punjāb would not have been appointed

government of as many as fifteen fortresses.*

The crowning achievement of Sultān Mahmūd (16) Somnāth was indeed the sack of Somnāth in Kathiāwār (1025-26 A C)† The shrine of Somnāth‡ was the most celebrated, the most opulent and the most revered on the Continent of India. "The wealth and importance of the shrine," says Sir W. Haig "far exceeded those of any temple which he had yet attacked. One thousand Brahmans daily attended the temple, three hundred and fifty of the unfortunate women whom the Hindūs dedicate nominally to the service of their gods and actually to the appetites of their priests danced continually before the idol, which was a huge *lingam* or phallus These priests and attendants

* Both these authorities seem to have drawn upon Gardīzī (*Z A*, 80)

† Ibn-ul-Asīr (*K T*, iv, 241-42), Ibn Zafir (*M G*, 115), Sibṭ-ul-Jawzī (*M G*, 115), Alberūnī (Sachao, ii, 9 & 103), Gardīzī (*Z A*, 86-87), Nizām-ud-Dīn Ahmad (*T A*, 9) and Khwāndmīr (*E & D* iv, 180) place this expedition in the year 1025-26 A C While translating the relevant passage of *K T* in *E & D*, (Vol ii, p 469), Elliot has carelessly recorded 414 A H for 416 A H This is an 'inadvertent error,' which has misled all those who have drawn upon *E & D* Ferishta has recorded 415 A H as the year of this expedition (*T F*, ii, 32), but his evidence cannot outweigh that of the original authorities quoted above Mark the mistake repeated by Sir W Haig (*C H I*, iii, 23), M Elphinstone (*H I*, 334), and Smith (*O H. I*, 193), who have blindly followed Ferishta and Elliot.

‡ For its site *etc*, see *M G*, 209 ff

were supported from the endowments of the temple, which are said to have consisted of the revenues of 10,000 villages, the idol was washed daily with water brought from the Ganges, 750 miles distant, and the jewels of the temple were famed throughout the length and breadth of India."* The object of Mahmūd in undertaking this arduous expedition is thus expressed by Allāma Kāmil Ibn-ul-Asīr :—

"When Yamīn-ud-Daulah (Mahmūd) was gaining victories and demolishing temples in India, the Hindūs said that Somnāth (a Hindū god) was displeased with these idols and that if he had been satisfied with them, no one would have destroyed or injured them. When Yamīn-ud-Daulah heard this, he resolved upon making a campaign to destroy this idol, believing that when the Hindūs saw their prayers and imprecations to be false and futile they would embrace the faith"†

Allāma Ibn Khaldūn also assigns almost the same motive to the expedition against Somnāth. He says —

"Before this whenever Sultān Mahmūd stormed a fort or destroyed an idol, Hindūs would say that Somnāth was annoyed with it and therefore allowed it to be destroyed, otherwise he would have killed Mahmūd much earlier.

* C H. I, iii, 23

† K T, ix, 241

From some source Mahmūd received this information and with a view to extirpate idolatry, to prove the helplessness of man-made gods and to belie the claims of the Hindūs, he mobilized his forces against Somnāth.*

Ferishta also strikes the same note† Sir W. Haig follows these authorities and thus expresses Mahmūd's motive in *The Cambridge History of India*.—

"The Brahmans attached to this famous shrine boasted that their master Shiva, the moon-lord, was the most powerful of all the gods and that it was only owing to his displeasure with other gods that the invader had been permitted to plunder and pollute their shrines. This provocative vaunt suggested to Mahmūd the destruction of the temple of Somnāth as the readiest means to a wholesale conversion of idolaters."‡

In other words, the object underlying the expedition against Somnāth was to disillusion the Hindūs and thus bring them within the fold of Islām. How far Mahmūd was moved by religious and how far by politico-economic motives in invading India time and again is a matter of controversy which has been dealt with

* I K, II, xii, 245,

† T. F, i, 132

‡ C H I., iii, 23.

in a separate chapter.* It may, however, be noted here that the motive assigned by the afore-said historians to the Somnāth expedition is unwarranted in-as-much as the object of the expedition, if it was really to effect a wholesale conversion of Hindūs, was not achieved, nor did Mahmūd try to achieve it even after a complete conquest of the place, though there is no doubt that this expedition, like others, was understood as a *Jihād* by the common people.

On the 18th of October, 1025 A. C., Mahmūd started from Ghaznīn and reached Multān on the 9th of the following November. There he took some rest and put his forces in order. Leaving Multān on the 26th of the same month, he passed through the desert, stormed the strong fort of Lodorva,† that fell on his way, and reached Anhilwāra about the end of December, 1025 A. C. At his approach Bhīmdeva, the Rāja of Anhilwāra, fled to the fort of Kandahat,‡ situated in the neighbourhood Mahmūd took

* See Chapter IV *infra*

† M G, 218

‡ The situation of this fort, which is also written as Khandama, Khandabā, Kandana, Khandana, *etc*, has taxed the ingenuity of a number of scholars who have identified it with Kanthkot in Vāgad (East Cutch), Gāndhavi Kāthiāwār coast, Gandhār to the north of the Dhad Khandadhar to the north-east angle of Kāthiāw Kanbāhat or Cambay, which bear some phonetic blance to it, but none except Kanbāhat (Cambay) answers well to the description given of it by Ibn seems to be correct (See S I-M H, 187-88)

possession of the town and then resumed his march to Somnāth. Defeating an army of 20,000 Hindūs at Mundher (or Mudhera) and overrunning Delvāda near Unā on his way, he took his stand before the very gates of the famous shrine on the 6th of January, 1026 A. C.* He invested the fortress, which was situated on the seashore and washed by the waves. The commander of the fort took to flight and the garrison did not stir out to meet the invaders, believing that their god, "the mighty Someshwar," would completely annihilate the "impious assailants." The Hindūs, who had climbed the ramparts to see the besiegers, shouted to the Musalmāns that their god had drawn them to that place in order to destroy them at one blow for the idols they had broken in Hindūstān. On the morning of the 7th of January, which was Friday, the fight began and before the time of *Juma'* prayer the defenders were overthrown by a deadly fusillade of arrows. The Musalmāns escalated the walls of the fort and proclaimed their victory by chanting a call for *Juma'* prayer. The Hindūs then entered the temple, prayed fervently to the idol for their success and sallied forth for fighting. They delivered a most desperate attack on their enemy and dislodged them from their newly occupied position. Next morning (Saturday) Mahmūd renewed the attack with such vigour that the Hindūs were driven back to the doors

* For Mundher and Delvāda, see *M G*, 215 ff

of the shrine, where a most terrible drama of bloodshed was enacted, so that 'few were left alive' Meanwhile, the neighbouring princes hastened to the rescue of the shrine and on the morning of the following day Mahmūd found his camp surrounded by hostile forces, which were constantly strengthened by fresh reinforcements. An irretrievable disaster seemed to be in store for Musalmāns and Mahmūd's position was extremely critical. As usual, the Sultān bowed down before *Allah* in all humility quite as fervently as the Hindūs knelt before the arch-idol, invoking assistance. Then rising up and springing into his saddle, as if inspired, he cheered up his soldiers and exhorted them to action with the usual battle-cry of *Allah o Akbar*. The exhortation had the desired effect, for the Muslims made a most desperate attack, broke through the ranks of the Hindū army and threw it into confusion. This victory decided the fate of Somnāth, for thereafter the panic-stricken garrison offered no resistance. Mahmūd entered the temple to reap the fruits of his victory. Never perhaps were his labours more materially rewarded. The idol of Somnāth was broken and the temple was divested of its wealth. After a stay of about fifteen days, Mahmūd left for Ghaznīn. The Rājas of Rājputāna, who had been taken unawares by Mahmūd's march through their country, were now advancing under

¹ For the legend relating to the breaking of this idol by Mahmūd, *vide* Chapter VI

Virama or Viryarāma Deva* of Sāmbhar to block his passage. Avoiding conflict with them, as he did not wish to risk the spoils he had with him, he took a more westerly route and wished to reach Multān through the desert of Sind. He marched northwards till he reached a shallow arm of the sea running between Cutch and Kāthiāwār. With the aid of native guides, who pointed out the passage to him, he led his forces across the channel. This heroic move on his part struck terror into the heart of the Rāja of Anhilwāra who had fled to the fort of Kandahat at the approach of the Muslim army. The Rāja again 'fled from the fortress in mean disguise,' leaving it at the mercy of the invader who occupied it and captured a number of prisoners. After that Mahmūd resumed his return-march, and proceeded across Cutch. It was there that he was led astray by a Hindū devotee of Somnāth who had offered to act as his guide. Extricating himself from this perilous situation, he safely crossed over to Sind and then marched to Mansūra, whose ruler† took to flight. While marching along the Indus towards Multān, Mahmūd and his followers

* Dr M Nāzım (M G, 119) calls him Parmadeva of Abū, which is a mistake (See S I-M H, 237). Sir W Haig (C H I, III, 25) has cautiously omitted his name and merely stated that he was the Rāja of Sāmbhar. Ferishta (T F, I, 34) states that he was the Rāja of Ajmer, but Ajmer was not founded till then.

† Farrukhī calls him Khafīf. He was a Carmāthian (See M G, 120).

suffered much at the hands of the Jāts who inhabited that part of the country. It was with great difficulty that the Sultān reached Ghaznīn on the 2nd of April, 1026 A. C.

"The expedition to Somnāth," says Dr M. Nāẓim, "is one of the greatest feats of military adventure in the history of Islām. The news of this victory sent a wave of joy all over the Muslim world, and the Caliph heaped titles and honours on the Sultān, his sons and his brother." Like many other heroes, Sultān Mahmūd became transformed into an almost mythical figure and generations of enthusiastic authors surrounded his name with a huge literature of fanciful stories which were intended to glorify him as a king and a warrior.† The idol of Somnāth itself perished but it immortalized the name of Sultān Mahmūd.‡

The last of Mahmūd's Indian expeditions

† On his return from Somnāth the Sultān received complimentary and congratulatory letters from Al-Qādir Billah, the Khalīfa of Baghdād, conferring upon him the title of *Kahf-ud-Daulah wal Islām* and upon his sons, Mas'ūd and Amīr Muhammad, those of *Shahāb-ud-Daulah wa Jamāl-ul-Millāh* and *Jalāl-ud-Daulah wa Jamāl-ul-Millāh* respectively and upon his brother, Yūsuf, that of *Azud-ud-Daulah wa Mu'ayyid-ul-Millāh*, as well as recognising the Sultān as the ruler of Khurāsān, Hindūstān, Sīstān, Nīmrūz and Khwārizm, and empowering him to nominate his successor.

‡ For some of these stories, see Chapter VI. A 'Awfi's *Jawāmi-ul-Hikāyāt*, Attār's *Kulliyāt*, *Hadīqah*, etc.

‡ M G, 120-21

was directed against the Jāts* who had wantonly molested his army on its return from Somnāth. It was undertaken in the spring of 1027 A. C.

At the approach of the invader, the Jāts took refuge in an island, enclosed by the smaller channels of the Indus, which could not be waded across and from where they could escape from one island to another in the hour of need. Mahmūd was quite on guard against this expediency and had therefore prepared a fleet of 1,400 boats, each of which was armed with three ironspikes—one in front and one on either side. Each of these boats carried twenty men armed with bows, arrows, hand-grenades and naphtha-balls. This fleet was launched on the Indus against the Jāts, who too had made ample preparations and brought a flotilla of 4000† boats, properly manned and equipped. When, however, the action began, it is stated, the boats of the Jāts were broken and capsized by the ironspikes with which the boats of their opponents were provided.‡ The victors then landed on the islands, where the Jāts had kept their families for safety, and captured a large booty.

* Alberūnī informs us that the Jāts were the worshippers of *linga* or phallus (Sachao, II, 104). They were not the inhabitants of the Salt Range in the Punjab, as alleged by some. They were the Bhatīs of Bhatner who had migrated to Sind (Burgess A S W I, II, 193).

† According to another account, their number was 8000, which seems to be an exaggeration.

‡ How this could be possible puts a strain on our credulity.

CHAPTER IV

SULTAN MAHMUD THE GREAT—III

MOTIVES AND RESULTS OF INDIAN INVASIONS

What were the aims and objects of Sultān Mahmūd in leading so many expeditions to India and what were the results and effects of those expeditions? This is a question which has been asked and answered too often and while answering which historians have expressed different views, almost all of which are, however, based on a superficial study of Sultān Mahmūd's life and character and of the history of his times. We shall deal first with his motives and then with the results of his invasions of India in order to show how far the motives are justified by the results.

As regards the motives, there are at present three distinct schools of thought:

MOTIVES.

According to one school, Mahmūd was a raider-in-chief who, in order to satisfy his greed for gold, "came, burnt, killed, plundered, captured and went." According to another school, he was "one of the greatest champions of Islām," whose principal aim in invading India was to extirpate idolatry and to propagate Islām at the point of the sword. The third school simply sidetracks by saying that "Mahmūd's character was complex" and it is nothing short of a wild goose chase to try

to ascertain the inspiring motive. The task is not so difficult as it seems to be at first sight, but in order to arrive at correct conclusions it is necessary to dive deep into the history of his reign and to find out the factors that were directly responsible for his invasions of India. For the sake of clarity and convenience these factors may be studied under the following heads, *viz.*, (1) Political, (2) Economic, and (3) Religious.

Among the political factors that were responsible for Mahmūd's wars in India the following will be found to be the most conspicuous: The first was the non-fulfilment or rather deliberate violation of the terms of the peace-treaty solemnly concluded by Rāja Jaipāl of Lāhore with Amīr Subuktigīn of Ghaznīn after suffering a crushing defeat in a battle in which he himself was the 'aggressor'.* The second was the invasion of Ghaznīn by Jaipāl with a view to win back what Subuktigīn had conquered from him †

* In the words of Dr Ishwara Topa "The first campaign against India was undertaken in order to effect the recognition of political obligations and to enforce the political supremacy with a view to raising the status and prestige of the Ghaznavide power in the eyes of the Indian Rāja" (*Politics in Pre-Mughal Times*, 33)

† See *supra*, pp 50-51 In view of Rāja Jaipāl's previous conduct and breach of faith, *etc*, I have absolutely no hesitation to believe the statement in the *Majma-ul-Ansāb*, in which he is shown as the aggressor Since

The third was the breach of faith on the part of Indian Rājas who, after entering into alliance with the Sultān, betrayed him. It will be remembered that at times Mahmūd contracted friendly relations with Indian Rājas, 'binding them under political obligations' When these 'obligations' were cast to the corner or broken, he declared war against them and punished them for their betrayal. The fourth was the renouncing of allegiance to the Sultān and the withholding of tributes promised to him by Indian Rājas. When defeated, Indian Rājas owed allegiance to him and agreed to pay him tribute annually. When the promised tribute was withheld and allegiance renounced, Mahmūd marched against them to punish them for their insubordination and to maintain his own political supremacy. The fifth was political betrayal in the form of help given to the enemies of the Sultān: Often Mahmūd's Hindū allies colluded with his enemies and plotted to overthrow him in league with them This was no less responsible

his defeat by Subuktigīn for the second time he must have been anxious to retrieve his reputation and to wipe off the stigma of repeated reverses and humiliation The death of Amīr Subuktigīn supplied him with the long-sought-for opportunity and he must have invaded Ghaznīn to achieve his object—to overthrow the Ghaznawid power and thus maintain his dignity among the Hindū Rājas and his own subjects His son and successor, Anandpāl, also enacted the same role soon after his accession He formed a formidable confederacy for the invasion of Ghaznīn and tried to do what his father could not See *supra*, pp 59 ff

for spurring him to take drastic actions against them and to pounce upon their States. The sixth was the molestation of the Sultān's Indian allies by their hostile neighbours. Whenever any Hindū Rājas turned against his allies and attacked them with a view to deprive them of their political power for the simple reason that they owed allegiance to the Ghaznawid Sultān, he had to come to their aid because regard for political obligations and respect for pledges given compelled him to do so. The seventh was the rebellion of his Indian vassals: Defiance of his authority in India by the Rājas of Indian States, who acknowledged his suzerainty, also led him to invade India for suppressing their rebellions and re-establishing his authority.*

The economic factors were quite as strong and stimulating as political: The Economic,— importance of wealth as a means of attaining political power and retaining it is too evident to be dealt with in detail. Suffice it to say that Mahmūd understood the importance and appreciated the miraculous powers of wealth. He knew that it was the very source of political strength and stability and was therefore keen on possessing as much of it as possible. India's fabulous wealth must have stirred his soul and stimulated his ambitions and

* These causes have been brought out at their places in Chapter III and here they are just referred to in order to facilitate the discussion

influenced his course of action. The unbroken series of victories won in India brought in their train a regular downpour of wealth which immensely augmented the Ghaznawid Treasury. The wealth thus acquired was used for the cultural as well as political advancement of the State, and this was mainly responsible for the glory that was Ghaznān and the might that was Mahmūd. It had no mean share in establishing his authority in his kingdom and his superiority over the kings of the Islāmic world in general and of the Indian world in particular. It enhanced the reputation of Ghaznān all over the world as a centre of power, as a source of light and as a seat of learning and culture. The wealth in his possession must have, moreover, served as a sure bait for the mercenaries who, unless and until they were given enough of it as a reward for their services, would not have accompanied him to his distant expeditions. To finance his schemes successfully, he stood in need of money and India was a veritable *El Dorado*.⁶

Before dealing with the religious factors which might have served as causes of the Ghaznawid invasions of India, it is necessary to know the tone of Muslim religious life in Mahmūd's times; for he was, after all, a product of his own environments and his actions must have been influenced by the ethical standards then in vogue. A

Hence the need and not the greed for gold lay at the root of his Indian invasions

reference, however brief, to the Qurānic conception of State is quite apropos of the subject. The method of government contemplated by the *Qur-ān* and recommended by the Prophet is theocracy, i. e., a system of social and political control founded on divine laws and sanctions, reflecting the will of God in all its forms and phases, motives and movements. The idea is to Islāmize life in accordance with the laws of the *Qur-ān* and to level down all differences and diversities of rank and race and to remove all inequalities, social as well as political. The ideal put before the Islāmic State was to Islāmize the people without injuring the religious susceptibilities of the *Zimmīs* (non-Muslims). The Prophet of Islām founded a theocratic State and gave a conclusive proof of its practicability. Not long after him, - however, reactions set in throughout the Islāmic world and 'shifted the Islāmic political ideal from its fulcrum to an ever-changing political gravitation'. So great in fact was the change that came over the Islāmic world that even the sponsors and stalwarts of Islāmic principles and practices lost respect for them and cared little to safeguard or promote the interests of Islām. With the conquest of Persia and the flow of wealth the theocratic form of government made room for a secular State. The *Sharīyat* ceased to influence politics. On the other hand, it was influenced by political considerations. With the rise of the Ommayyades to power and the transfer of the seat of government to Damascus,

the change became more pronounced. Amīr Muāwiya resorted to all sorts of means for his political aggrandizement. Under him the State was completely secularized and the interests of Islām were relegated to the background. But for the unique sacrifice of Hussain made at the desert of Karbala, the fate of Islām would have been sealed.¹ Musalmāns—not Islām, as erroneously supposed by some,—had drifted afar from the high ideals set forth by Islām and translated into action by the Apostle. Under the cover of religion ambitious leaders easily advanced their political interests. They were, as a matter of fact, makers, builders and founders of States and not preachers, propagators or defenders of the Faith, though they often posed to be and easily passed for such persons. Their acts may perhaps be justified politically, but not Islāmically. Mahmūd was the product of his environments. Quite in keeping with the spirit of the age, he also advanced his political interests under the cloak of religion. † 'Utbī informs us that soon after

¹ See *T T*, vi, 184, I K., II, iv, v, *Usad-al-Ghaba* by Ibn Asīr Jazrī, iii, 299, 401, *Istī'ab* by Ibn Abdul-Barr, i, 66, 154, *Swāiq-i-Mulriqā*, 56, 135, *Islām under the Arabs* by Osborn, and *A Short History of the Saracens* by Amīr 'Alī, 95

† Clever leaders too often hired the services of corrupt *Ulamā* who turned and twisted the meaning of some verses of the Holy *Qur-ān* and interpreted them so as to serve their ends, and to those who were always out to find or forge moral and religious support for them

his recognition as an independent ruler by the Khalīfa of Baghdād, Mahmūd made it obligatory on himself to invade India every year. Modern writers have put a new interpretation on this statement and tried to ascribe religious motivation to what were admittedly political exploits. Their interpretation is not supported or substantiated by historical evidence. The pledge given to the Khalīfa was not the only '*testimony*' in his invasions of India. It would perhaps be more proper to say that underlying the pledge were political motives and the cries of 'holy wars' *etc.* were raised to stir up the soldiers to action and to ensure further recruitments. The resolution was made with a view "to please the Khalīfa with whom he wished to cultivate most cordial and loyal relations in order to cover the illegitimate revolutionary origin of his dynasty, which was still fresh in the memory of the men of time he maintained the most loyal relations with the spiritual head of Islām, the Khalīf of Baghdād, Alkadar (381-422 A. H.), who had clad the usurpation of his family with the mantle of legitimacy; and in order to please him, he hunted down the heretics in his realm in Khurāsān and in Multān, impaling or stoning

patrons, such verses of the sacred text as "Obey Allah, obey the Apostle and *obey those in authority from among you*" (S. IV, V. 59) and "Do *Jihād* against the unbelievers" (S. IX, V. 73) were full of possibilities of ingenious interpretations. They fully exploited these verses for gaining their ends. (See my book on *Some Cultural Aspects of Muslim Rule in India*, pp. 13, 16-18)

them. He tried to rid the Khalīf of the real or suspected votaries of his opponent, the Anti-Khalīf in Egypt, the famous Hākīm " Politically, the Khilāfat had become bankrupt and the Khalīfa an almost nonentity, but the institution still commanded the respect of the Muslim world and the Khalīfa was still 'a useful ally for a warrior who was burning with the desire for expansion' Political considerations and not religious sentiments were at the root of Mahmūd's loyalty to the Khalīfa. He obeyed the Khalīfa and persecuted the Carmāthians and other non-Sunnīs, against whom the latter had declared a war, because he wished to win through him the good-will of the Muslim world for strengthening the foundations of his kingdom. In appreciation of his services, the Khalīfa heaped upon him and his sons honours and titles which immensely enhanced his prestige in the Muslim world. Gradually, however, as his might and means increased and his name was surrounded by a halo of glory, even this outward respect for the moribund institution was grudged.† We hear of at least three great ruptures in his relations with the Khalīfa when he decided to shake off the supremacy of that nominal power—

Sachao's Alberūnī Also see *M G*, 160-61.

† According to Dr M Nāzım, "The Sultān became less obsequious towards him (Khalīfa) and sometimes months passed before Baghdād was officially informed of his victories" (*M G*, 165) This change of attitude is evident from the letters addressed by him to the Khalīfa and preserved in the *Tajārīb*, III, 341-44.

for the first time when the Khalīfa refused to give him Samarqand and he threatened him with the invasion of his capital (Baghdād) with one thousand elephants so as to lay it waste and carry its earth to his own capital (Ghaznīn) on their backs,* for the second time when Abū 'Alī Hasan (Hasanak) received a robe of honour from al-Zāhir, the Fātimid Khalīfa of Cairo, on his return from a pilgrimage to Mecca and the Khalīfa of Baghdād sent a strongly worded letter to the Sultān, directing him to order the immediate execution of Hasanak on the charge of subscribing to the Carmāthian creed,† and for the third time when he left his son, Mas'ūd, at Ray with instructions to conquer Isfahān and 'release the Caliph from the bondage of the Buwaihids' with a view 'to bring the Caliph under his sway. ‡ On the first occasion he disarmed the opposition of the Khalīfa only by making profuse apologies and adopting a reverential attitude towards him. On the second occasion he appeased the Khalīfa by sending Hasanak's robe of honour to Baghdād, where it was burnt to ashes in a public square. On the third occasion his death upset his plans and schemes. From all that has been said it is clear that he had scant courtesy for the Khalīfa, though he did not want to offend the power which had strengthened his position

* *T F*, i, 28, and *T H*, i, 277

† *T M*, 111-212, *K T*, ix, 239, and *M G*, 165

‡ *T M*, 83 and 359

morally and which, even in its hour of weakness, was strong enough to shake and shatter the moral foundations of his empire.

Now that we have acquainted ourselves with the currents and cross-currents of politico-religious history of Mahmūd's times, it has become easy for us to proceed with our inquiry into the motives of Mahmūd in leading so many expeditions against India. But before proceeding with the inquiry it will be proper to answer the following questions —

(1) Were Mahmūd's invasions of India really *Jihāds*? (2) Was propagation of Islām in India his chief aim? (3) Was extirpation of idolatry his main object? (4) Was territorial annexation the inspiring motive?

Were Mahmūd's invasions of India *Jihāds*?—

Were Indian
Invasions
Jihāds? In order to answer this question correctly, it is necessary to know what *Jihād* really means. The word *Jihād* is a derivative, of which the root is *Jahd* or *Juhd*, which means power, exertion or struggle. The Qur-ānic conception of *Jihād* is contained in verse 20 of *Sūra ix* of the *Qur-ān*, which reads: "Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive with might and main, in God's cause with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of God:

They are the people who will achieve (salvation).”* Allāma Abdullah Yūsuf ‘Alī has beautifully summed up the meaning of this verse in the following words. “Here is a good description of *Jihād*. It *may* require fighting in God’s cause, as a form of self-sacrifice. But its essence consists in (1) a true and sincere Faith, which so fixes its gaze on God, that all selfish and worldly motives seem paltry and fade away, and (2) an earnest and ceaseless activity, involving the sacrifice (if need be) of life, person or property, in the service of God. Mere brutal fighting is opposed to the whole spirit of *Jihād*, while the sincere scholar’s pen or preacher’s voice or wealthy man’s contribution may be the most valuable forms of

* This is what the *Qur-ān* enjoins. Hostile critics of Islām have taken some stray verses from the *Qur-ān* and forced on them interpretations which the text and the trend of the text do not at all bear. For instance, the so-called *Sūrat-ūs-Saif* or “the *Sūrat* of the *Sword*” is taken out from the text and interpreted to mean ‘war against unbelief,’ and argued that Islām enjoins the use of the sword for the spread of the faith. Now if this verse is read with the text that precedes it, the correct meaning becomes quite clear. It then means war against aggressive and perfidious unbelievers and not against all. Going further, it is ordered that war should cease as soon as the opponents sue for peace. Why to enter into a peace before the opponents are done to death or converted to Islām? This militates against the theory of force and conclusively proves that fighting is recommended in Islām only for the preservation of peace. The correctness of this interpretation is warranted by the *Qur-ānic* injunctions “Let there be no compulsion in religion”, and “Commit no excesses . . .”, and by the life of the Prophet and his

Jihād." Looked at in the light of the Holy *Qur-ān*, Mahmūd's expeditions against India cannot be called *Jihāds*. From their very character it appears that they were secular exploits and not religious wars waged for the cause of Islām or in the service of God [Mahmūd's armies were composed of professional soldiers and mercenaries of various denominations and not *Mujāhids* or holy warriors. War was the prevailing passion or rather the fashion of the day, and the spirit of the age, not the sanction of the *Qur-ān*, was behind them. Incidentally, it may be pointed out here that Mahmūd was not an *Amir* as Islām would have it and his was not a State

attitude towards the *Zimmīs*, which throw a flood of light on the real significance of *Jihād*. In verse 73 of *Sūra ix* the Prophet is ordered to "do *Jihād* against the unbelievers and the hypocrites." And what were the weapons employed by him for that *Jihād*—kindness, generosity, forgiveness, charity, peace, respect and what not. History teems with instances to illustrate this point and they drive us to the conclusion that *Jihād* means anything but bloodshed for the spread of the faith. See *Al-Qur-ān*, ii, 190-93, 216-17, 243-51, 256, iv, 74-76, 81, 170, viii, 39, 65, ix, 5, 6, 12, 13, 16, 20, 29, 73, 123, xii, 39, 41, and xvii, 4, 20.

~ *The Holy Qur-ān* (translated by A. Y. 'Alī), p. 444, note 1270.

† It may be noted here that Islāmic wars are always defensive and in the service of God. Islām is always at war against Evil, but as a religion of peace it recommends peaceful methods for fighting it out. The use of the sword is permitted in exceptional circumstances, e.g., when the life and liberty of Muslims and their honour and religion are in danger.

contemplated by the *Qur-ān*. He was an absolute monarch and his government was far from theocracy. Before launching a campaign against idolatry or *Jihad* against the infidels, he ought to have Islāmized his own State and acted in accordance with the principles of Islām in the matter of succession to the throne and other important affairs, if he was a true and sincere champion of Islām, as he is supposed to have been.

Like a good Muslim, who is always expected to be an active missionary of his religion, Mahmūd might have felt delighted in the spread of his faith, but that does not seem to have been the only object underlying his Indian expeditions. He was more of a conqueror than a fanatical propagandist, or a pious missionary. To say that he invaded India time and again for the spread of his religion is historically wrong and psychologically untrue. In the first place, there is no scrap of evidence in the contemporary chronicles to show that he ever won converts, whether by force or by peaceful means.* We do come across one or two instances when he is said to have appointed teachers and preachers for the instruction of new converts and Hindūs in the rudiments of Islām.† Whether this was done in response to

* It is a different thing if a Hindū Rājā and his followers embraced Islām to escape defeat and destruction.

† Z. A., 72^b and 78-79.

the dictates of his conscience or out of political motives—, for he had to please and pacify those whom he had brought to India on the pretext of *Jihāds* or 'holy wars'—, may remain a matter of moot; but it is abundantly clear that nothing useful was accomplished by him so far as the spread of Islām in India was concerned. "Some *rājās* are said to have embraced Islām," says Dr. M. Nāzım, "but they did so most probably as a political shift to escape the fury of the conqueror and returned to their faith as soon as he had turned his back on them." This was obviously because the Hindūs were not yet told and taught what Islām was and what it stood for. "The period of Sultān Mahmūd," says the same scholar, "was essentially a period of conquest" and "the time was not yet ripe for missionary work which required settled government."† The policy of conquest and consolidation, it may be observed, was not followed and no attempt was made to establish a settled government in India; otherwise one province, permanently occupied, would have done far more for conversion than all his invasions together. The whole of Mahmūd's time in India was spent in waging wars and amassing wealth and he had little leisure to devote to the sacred cause. Consequently, he is not entitled to the 'credit' which he has received from his misinformed admirers for the alleged propagation of

* M. G., 162

† *Ibid*, 162

Islām in India.* Secondly, Islām was not presented to the Hindūs in the manner prescribed by the Prophet. In matters of faith it is the method of presentation that matters much and no religion can score success, such as Islām has done, if it is conveyed through the agency of wars and bloodshed† The Prophet of Islām did not

* Ignorant fanatics who extol Mahmūd for propagating Islām in India at the point of the sword, which he never did, do him more harm than good and indirectly bring discredit to Islām which enjoins universal toleration and positively forbids the use of force in effecting conversions.

† This point requires some elucidation Propagation of Islām in India was not the inspiring motive of Mahmūd's invasions of India, but there is absolutely no doubt that his Indian expeditions were given out to be and understood as '*Jihāds*' or holy wars, undertaken for the extirpation of idolatry and the propagation of Islām in India. It is in this sense that Professor Muhammad Habīb (S M G, 81) has remarked that "the career of the conquering Ghaznavide created a burning hatred for the new faith in the Hindū mind" because it was presented "in the guise of plundering armies" Dr M. Nāzim has misunderstood this remark and therefore criticised it. In his opinion "The Hindūs rejected Islām as their national religion because of the fundamental and irreconcilable differences between Islām and Hindūism". The learned Doctor has tried to substantiate his point by saying that "Islām, with its definite articles of faith, could not appeal to the average Hindū to whom religion had never meant any specified set of doctrines". He is sadly mistaken. In my opinion Islām is nothing if not natural and conducive to human welfare — spiritual as well as secular. It was nothing if it failed to appeal to the down-trodden Hindūs — Hindūs who had been subjected to grave inequalities and who had become fed up with the lot assigned to them by their

preach his faith by waging wars and leading expeditions against the infidels. Mahmūd, whose knowledge of Islāmic theology was undisputed, cannot be said to have been ignorant of such injunctions of the *Qur-ān* as "*Lā ikrāha fid dīn.*" (Let there be no compulsion in religion) His religious policy was based on toleration and "he is not said to have forced any Hindū to abjure his religion or to have put any person to death for the sake of conscience". Referring to his religious policy, M. Elphinstone tells us that "it is nowhere asserted that he ever-put

religion. A large majority of the Hindūs were in need of a shelter and no religion could provide a better shelter for them than Islām. Their minds were quite open to receive the truth. Presented in its proper form and propagated in the manner prescribed by the Prophet, Islām was sure to reap a rich harvest. The subsequent history of Islam in India bears eloquent testimony to this hard historical fact. The only difficulty in its way was the opposition of the Brahmans who had grown fat at the expense of low-caste Hindūs, such as Shudras, because Islām—with its democratic principles of equality and brotherhood—would have dealt a death-blow to their supremacy, which they so jealously guarded. But with the majority of the Hindūs in its favour, it was not difficult to overcome their opposition. "The fundamental and irreconcilable differences between Islām and Hindūism," referred to by Dr. M. Nāzīm, ought to have facilitated rather than retarded the work of conversion in India, for if Islām and Hindūism were alike, there was no need for change and conversion would have been out of question.

* P P-M T, 45 "Though zealous for Islām," says Sir W. Haig, "he maintained a large body of Hindū troops, and there is no reason to believe that conversion was a condition of their service." (C H I., III, 27)

a Hindū to death except in battle or in the storm of a fort.* Under him the Hindūs enjoyed perfect religious freedom. They were entrusted with highly responsible posts, and religion was not a condition of their service. The names of Tilak, Rāi Hindū, Hajrāi and Sonī stand out pre-eminently in the military history of Ghaznīn.† Mahmūd was a conqueror and he drew no hard and fast lines between Hindūs and Muslims in his schemes of conquest. Of his Indian expeditions at least two were led against the Muslims for much the same reasons as against the Hindū Rājas, and almost all his Central Asian expeditions were led against Muslims. "If he harassed the Hindū rājas of India," says Dr. M. Nazim, "he did not spare the Muslim sovereigns of Irān and Transoxiana. The drama of plunder and bloodshed that was enacted in the sacred Ganges Doab was repeated with no less virulence on the slopes of the Mount Damāwand and the banks of the river Oxus. Religious considerations rarely weighed with a conqueror and the Sultān does not appear to have been influenced by them in his schemes of conquest"‡ His transactions with Hindū Rājas were guided entirely by policy, without reference to religion, and he cannot be blamed or praised for what he never did nor attempted to do. Was then, it may well be asked now, propagation of Islām his object in leading

* H. I., 293.

† P. P.-M. T.

‡ H. I., 293.

his expeditions against India? Emphatically not. Like other kings, who preceded and followed him, Mahmūd did not concern himself with the work of conversion—that was left to saints and savants like Sayyad 'Alī Hujverī and Muīn-ud-Dīn Chishtī—for his own hands were too full of political pre-occupations to leave him leisure to turn his attention to that side. No honest historian can conceal the truth and no Muslim, acquainted with his faith, can justify Mahmūd's expeditions from religious point of view and call them *Jihāds*. Far from enjoining or recommending, Islām—which means peace, which preaches peace and which stands for universal peace—, does not even countenance but positively forbids the use of force for the spread of the faith and no principle known to the *Shariyat* enjoins, recommends, justifies or countenances systematic spoliation of temples and places of worship for the acquisition of wealth.

Extirpation
of idolatry? Mahmūd launched no organized effort to destroy idolatry in India. He attacked shrines, raised temples to the ground and broke idols to pieces¹ not because it was meritorious from religious

¹ It may be noted here that in those times the Musalmāns (or rather new converts to Islām) had become so fed up with idolatry and carried such a deep-seated prejudice against it that soon after their conversion they made it a point to destroy it root and branch. If, therefore, Mahmūd broke idols at some places, it was most probably in order to please his followers. His expeditions were

point of view, but because they were fortified places, containing treasures of India's fabulous wealth. No temples, other than those of the kind described above, were touched; and once peace was concluded, everything was safe and toleration in the widest sense of the word was granted to all and sundry. While referring to "the mundane motives" of Mahmūd's Indian invasions, Dr. Ishwara Topa says: "It may also be observed, that the temples of India which Mahmūd raided, were storehouses of enormous and untold wealth and also some of these were political centres. The temples were, in fact, broken during the campaigns for reasons other than religious, but in times of peace Mahmūd never demolished a single temple * If the destruction of temples and

understood as *Jihāds* (holy wars or wars against unbelief) and hence the historians of that age have also referred to them as such and, given full vent to their own religious vanity Mark the change in the conception of *Jihād*

* *Politics in Pre-Mughal Times*, pp 46-47 Dr M Nāzīm's remarks in this connection are equally interesting He says "The critics who accuse the Sultān of wanton bloodshed and reckless spoliation of Hindū temples, forget that these so-called barbarities were committed in the course of legitimate warfare, when such acts are sanctioned by the practice of all the great conquerors of the world Spoils captured from a defeated enemy have always been considered the lawful property of the victorious army In India, however, wealth was accumulated, not only in the cofers of the kings, as in other countries, but also in the vaults of the temples which were consecrated to the service of various deities The consequence was that, while elsewhere the capture of the defeated monarch's treasury usually gratified the conqueror's lust for mammon,

the extinction of idolatry or the spread of Islām in India were his motive, he ought to have followed that policy in times of peace as well, first in his own country and then outside, and then there was no need to enter into treaties without achieving the object. We know it for certain that the Hindūs enjoyed full toleration under Sultān Mahmūd. Al-Ma'arrī informs us that they were granted separate quarters in the Imperial Ghaznīn and allowed to observe their religious ceremonies without any let or hindrance.* In other words, they were quite free to blow their *Sankh* and to bow before their idols under the very nose of the Sultān.

Was conquest or territorial annexation his chief object? This too is far-fetched, for he never contemplated an Indian empire. Perhaps, he knew that a Muslim empire in an alien country was then almost impossible; that it would involve a great waste of men and money if he tried to hold in subjection a race hostile in religion and language, customs and traditions, tastes and temperaments, habits and hobbies; and that it was beyond the range of practical politics to establish his sway in Central Asia as well as in India simultaneously. Nor does permanent annexation seem to have been his principal motive. The

in India temples were also ransacked to secure the piles of gold and precious stones in them" (M. G., 163).

2. *Risālat-ul-Ghufrān*, p. 153.

annexation of a part of the Punjāb and some other places such as Sind and Multān, which lay contiguous to the Ghaznawid Empire, proves rather than refutes his non-territorial designs. The Punjāb was annexed, because with it as a base Mahmūd could successfully attack the places beyond His western campaigns, on the other hand, disclose a different policy—that of acquisition and annexation, conquest and consolidation. At times, when necessary, he himself, even when his health did not permit, supervised the expeditions undertaken against his enemies and tried to establish his sway in the newly conquered territories in the west, not so in the east.

What it may then be asked, was the inspiring motive? The establishment of a Turko-Persian or Central Asian empire and nothing beyond that was the chief motive of Mahmūd's Indian invasions, which were undertaken for the realization of that object. In the first place, they gave him the much-needed appellation of "holy warrior" and enhanced his prestige in the Muslim world; and secondly, they cemented his strength and constituted a great financial asset to his military resources. In other words, his Indian expeditions were undertaken for political as well as economic purposes; * and in

* Professor M. Habib is perfectly right in saying that "Islam sanctioned neither the vandalism nor the plundering motives of the invader," but I do not find it possible to

many respects they were justified, for in the first clash between the Hindūs and the Musalmāns in the reign of Subuktigīn, the former were the aggressors and when defeated and reduced to submission they renounced allegiance, formed confederacies to stem the rising tide of the Ghaznawids and fought against Mahmūd

Sultān Mahmūd invaded India time and again and conquered a number of places. Almost the whole of Northern India felt the force of his arms, but the results of his victories were far from permanent. The one permanent result of his seventeen successful invasions of India was that only a few of the places he had conquered there, were permanently annexed to the Empire of Ghaznīn, for after his death only a portion of the Punjāb, Sind and some parts of the adjoining provinces, such as Multān, acknowledged his suzerainty. Elsewhere in India, the results of his expeditions and of a series of

agree with him when he says that Mahmūd's attacks on India were "un-called for" and that "the Hindu princes had done Mahmūd and his subjects no harm" (S M G, 79) See *supra*, pp 85 ff, where I have made it abundantly clear that the Hindūs were the aggressors and that they themselves were responsible for exciting the hostilities of the Ghaznawids. The Ghaznawids paid them in their own coin with, of course, compound interest. If they had not done so, the Hindūs would have enacted the role of conquerors and the fate of the Ghaznawids would have been sealed. This is what my reading of the original sources has led me to

victories soon wore off. His rule did not take root in the places he conquered and the Rājputs re-established their rule in Northern India, excepting the few places referred to above, and continued to rule for about two centuries more. Thus, while Amīr Subuktigīn had left Peshāwar as an outpost of Ghaznīn, his more celebrated son and successor, Sultān Mahmūd, left the Punjāb as an outpost of his far-flung Central Asian empire. This was the net-result of his seventeen expeditions of India so far as conquest or territorial annexations were concerned.

✓ But the effects of Mahmūd's invasions of India were far more enduring than
EFFECTS— their results. *Politically*—These expeditions paved the way for the establishment of a permanent Muslim empire in India by flinging open its gates to the subsequent Muslim invaders, by exposing the weaknesses of the Indian political and military systems and by establishing the superiority of the Musalmāns over the Hindūs in the art of war, discipline and devotion to duty. *Economically*—They were a heavy drain on India's age-long accumulated wealth. They made India much poorer and contributed vastly to the glory and grandeur that was Ghaznīn. They were a great financial asset to Mahmūd's military programme, because they immeasurably augmented his resources and ensured his success by enabling him to finance his schemes of conquest without experiencing any difficulty. *Culturally*—They brought two great civilizations,

Islām and Hindūism—into contact and led to mutual intercourse between Hindūs and Musalmāns. In the train of Muslim warriors and warlords came Muslim saints and savants who permeated the ranks of Indian society, propagated Islām in India and won a number of converts. In a land of idolaters, littered with temples, containing myriads of man-made gods and sounding with temple bells, mosques were founded and cries of *Lā-ilahā-illallaho Muhammad-ur-Rasūl-ullah* (There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His prophet) and *Allah o Akbar* (God is Great) began to sound and pronounce the unity of God. But for the successful invasions of Sultān Mahmūd it would have been well nigh impossible for the Muslim missionaries to settle down in India and carry on their work peacefully. Their importance from Islāmic point of view lies in the fact that they indirectly facilitated the future progress of Islām in India. But this had nothing to do with the motives of Mahmūd and we are not prepared to assign him any credit for what he never *did* nor *aimed* to do.

SULTAN MAHMUD THE GREAT—IV

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES OF HIS REIGN

Great as a conqueror, fit to rank with the greatest conquerors of the world like Alexander the Great, Mahmūd was equally great as a man of culture and refinement. His achievements in the arts of peace were on a par with his victories in the science of war and compare favourably with those of Cæsar Augustus. An attempt is made in this chapter to bring out in brief the contributions he made to the cause of Islāmic culture and civilization.

In order to appreciate his work, it is necessary to have an idea of his tastes. We have already said something about his education in connection with his early life. * In continuation of that account it may be observed that he grew up to be a good scholar and a fine poet † Some of his poetical compositions are preserved by 'Awfi in his *Lubāb-ul-Albāb*. ‡ He was very fond of Islāmic law and Tradition and his proficiency in these subjects was recognized even

* See *supra*, pp 24-26

† *M G*, 156-57, and *Lubāb-ul-Albāb*, II, 24.

‡ *Lubāb-ul-Albāb*, II, 24

by the most practised theologians of the day. *Fiqh* seems to have been his most favourite subject, for his name is intimately associated with the authorship of a standard work on the subject, called *Tafriḍ-ul-Furū* * Allāma Ibn Khalkān informs us that Imām-ul-Haramain Abul Ma'ālī Abdul Mulk Jawāin has recorded in his work entitled *Mugh̃is-ul-Khalq fī Ikhtiyār-ul-Haq* that Mahmūd was deeply interested in *Aḥādīth* (Traditions); that *Ulamā*, possessing a profound knowledge of the subject, used to meet at his Court and recite *Aḥādīth* in his presence; and that he listened to them with great avidity and asked them to explain the points which he did not understand †

Himself a scholar and a poet and a true lover of learning, Mahmūd was in —, patronage of letters. a position to judge and appreciate literary merits, and hence he rose to be one of the greatest patrons of letters. The literary renaissance of Persia found in him a most powerful exponent and his contributions to the development of Persian literature assign him a high place in the literary history of Persia. ‡ His patronage of Persian literature has rarely

* Some scholars have expressed doubts about Mahmūd's authorship of the book, but there is nothing improbable in it (See *MI G*, 157 note).

† *Tārīkh-i-Ibn Khalkān* (Eg ed.), II, 86, and *I. K*, II, XII, (translator's note), 256 ff.

‡ *L H P*, I, II, *S. A*, I, and *S P. L*

been surpassed.* Like many a Muslim king he loved the society of learned men and used to invite them to his Court from distant countries.† His bounty attracted a large number of scholars to Ghaznīn and made it a centre of light and learning for all Asia. While the French Napoleon used to import the choicest works of art and literature from the countries he conquered to add to the beauty and grandeur of Paris, the Ghaznawid Napoleon fetched over to his beloved Ghaznīn the artists, scholars and poets in person from the regions he reduced to his sway in order to enhance the splendour of his famous Court. He accorded a most warm welcome to learned refugees from all climes and countries and took care to carry out their wishes. Whenever he conquered a new town, he at once transported to his capital all the choicest works of art and literature obtained from its libraries and museums and thus augmented the wealth of art and literature already accumulated there ‡ The celebrated author of the *Tarikh-i-Guzidah* informs us that he spent a sum of not less than 400,000 dinārs per year

* Barthold's view (*Turkestan*, 289) that Mahmūd's patronage of learning was due to an ostentatious desire to convert his Court into a cradle of culture and not to an innate love of learning is erroneous and ill-founded. Mahmūd might have been influenced by this ulterior motive, but in view of the fact that he was himself a scholar, a poet and an author, it cannot be said that his love of learning was not genuine

† *T M*, 232-33, 245 and 247.

‡ *K T.*, ix, 262

on the literary luminaries of his realm * Ferishta¹ would have us believe that no king had ever gathered more learned men at his Court than Mahmūd † M. Elphinstone says that "he showed so much munificence to individuals of eminence that his capital exhibited a greater assemblage of literary genius than any other monarch in Asia has ever been able to produce." ‡ Dr M. Nāzım assures us that "his meanest rewards were calculated in thousands of *dīnārs*, and the later generations of poets have cherished his memory as a giver of elephant-loads of gold and silver" § This is enough to indicate the extent of Mahmūd's literary interest and now we shall make a short reference to the progress of Persian language and literature under his patronage.

The Arab conquest of Persia was fraught with far-reaching consequences. With the transfer of the seat of Islāmic Government to Baghdād, the cultural centre of gravity also shifted there, and Persian ideas and ideals began to flow fast into the ranks of Muslim society to change its outlook on life and letters. When the Arabs came into close contact with the Persians, they took an unusual fancy to the culture of the conquered and in their eager fascination for it

* T G, 395.

† T F, 1, 22

‡ H I, 290

§ M. G, 158

they forgot to pick and choose from Persian ideas: They assimilated them wholesale in almost every department of administration and in every sphere of social life. Politically, they adopted the system of Persian government—division and organization of the various departments of the State, their names and functions, the entire paraphernalia of Persian monarchy—the personality of the Persian King, his seraglio, his slaves, his servants, State ceremonies and all other symbols of sovereignty. Socially, they imbibed Persian ideas of social pleasures and pastimes and took over from the Persians their chase, chess and *Chāugān* (polo), drinking, music and songs, and even their national spring festival of Nauroz. Culturally, they made Persian their Court language and took almost all Persian ideas, including *Ta'bir* or the science of interpreting dreams. Here we are chiefly concerned with the cultural side of this all-embracing influence.* In a nut-shell, Persian language and literature received a new lease of life as a result of this change. When, after the fall of the Abbāsīd Khilāfat, the Sāmānids established their sway in Transoxiana and extended it to Turkistān, Isfahān and Khurāsān, Persian superseded Arabic and became the language of the court and the country, the *Tārikh-i-Tabarī*, a standard work on Islāmic history, was translated into Persian from Arabic by the Vazīr of one of the Sāmānids in 946 A.C. and poets like

* For some more details, see my book on "*Some Cultural Aspects of Muslim Rule in India*", pp. 6 ff.

Rūdīkī* began to use Persian as their medium of expression. The Sāmānid Kings were great patrons of Persian language and literature, and poetry in particular made much progress under their patronage. The fall of their dynasty left the literary luminaries unremunerated and they flocked eagerly to Ghaznīn, the new home of light and learning and the new cradle of the sage and the scholar. There they were accorded a most warm welcome and there they found full scope for the display of their talents. It would be impossible, even if the author were competent, to do full justice to the subject within the scope of a small chapter.† Attention is therefore focussed on the achievements of some of the most important scholars and poets who flourished under the patronage of Sultān Mahmūd, contributed vastly to Persian literary culture and immortalized the name of their Imperial patron.

The versatile Abū Rihān Muḥammad *bin* Ahmad, known to history as Alberūnī (the foreigner), comes first in order of importance. He was

* He received 80,000 *dirhams* from a Sāmānid Prince for a moral work (*H I*, 290 foot-note)

† Competent scholars like Browne, Shibli and Azād have written volumes on the subject and the more inquisitive readers would find much to quench their thirst for knowledge with in their works entitled *A Literary History of Persia*, *Shir-ul-'Ajam* and *Sukhandān-i-Pāras* respectively. The *Tazkarat-ush-Shu'ara* by Amīr Daulat Shāh also contains much useful information on the subject, chiefly on poetry.

decidedly the most shining star in the firmament of Mahmūd's literary world. As a versatile genius, he was un-equalled, unapproached and unrivalled. At once an astronomer, philosopher, geographer, mathematician, chronologist and a profound scholar of Sanskrit, Alberūnī's mind was indeed "encyclopædic." He was brought from his native Khwārizm as a captive, thrown into prison and subsequently exiled into Hindūstān on that life of travel and tour to which we owe the immortal *Tahqīq-ma-lī-Hind*, which is a veritable mine of information about the life and thought of contemporary India. He travelled all over India, applied his vigorous intellect to the study of the language of the Hindūs, their arts and sciences, their philosophy and literature, their customs and traditions, in short, the entire paraphernalia of their civilization, and embodied his observations in a book which is a great asset to the study of Hindū history and an indispensable source of information. The philosophic and scientific spirit that animates Alberūnī in the laborious and sympathetic treatment of his subject on an alien culture is a complete contrast to the pride and prejudice of the narrow-minded scholars of the West and serves as an imperishable index to the intellectual character of Islām and the catholicity of Muslim mind. In return for his knowledge of their customs and traditions, their thoughts and ideas, he communicated to the people of India the wisdom of the Baghdādian school.* His

* *The Spirit of Islām*, Amīr 'Alī, 380, O. H. I, 194.

work on astronomy, called *Al-qānūn-al-Mas'ūdī* or "*the Canon Masudicus*" after the name of his Imperial patron, Sultān Mas'ūd, is a milestone of literary research and a monument to his memory. His *Tahqīq-mā-līl-Hind*,* which amply manifests the extent to which the Muslim scholars had turned the treasures of Greek lore to fruitful purposes, is an embodiment of well-digested erudition and untiring industry. His another great work, which deserves specific mention, is the *Asār ul-Bāqīya* or "*the Vestiges of the Past*"† He also translated into Arabic the Sanskrit work entitled *Karanātīlaka* by Vijayānanda, son of Jayānanda, of Benāres, and renamed it *Ghurrat-uz-Zijāt*. Besides these master pieces of literature, he wrote many other books on different subjects, such as astronomy, mathematics, geography, physics and chemistry.

Abū Nasr Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Jabbār al-'Utbi ‡ was a distinguished Al-'Utbi historian and penman attached to the Court of Sultān Mahmūd. He wrote a history of the reign of his Imperial

* This work has been translated into English by Dr E C Sachau under the title "*Alberūnī's India*". The original title of the work is *Tahqīq-mā-līl-Hind* and not *Tārīkh-ul-Hind* or *Tārīkh-i-Hind*, as wrongly given in some books, e g, E & D, p 1, and *Encyclopædia of Islām*, 1, 726

† This work also is translated by Dr E C Sachau under the title '*The Chronology of Ancient Nations*'

‡ For his life and work, see al-'Utbi in *Ency of Islām*

patron, entitled *Kitāb-ul-Yamīnī* or *Tārīkh-i-Yamīnī* which, though deficient in dates and details, is still an indispensable authority on the life and work of Sultān Mahmūd. From literary point of view it is very ornate and the author seems to have concentrated more on the beauty of style and diction than on historical data and dates of important events.

Among others who deserve specific mention

Others in this hurried survey were Al-Farabī, the famous philosopher who was considered 'a second Aristotle' by the Arabs of his day and honoured and prized by Mahmūd the more since the refusal of his precursor, Abū 'Alī Sīnā (Avicenna)* who was 'undoubtedly one of the greatest thinkers and physicians the world has produced', to join his Court; Abdul Malīk bin Muhammad bin Ismā'īl as-Salabī, the learned author of a metrical history of Irān from the earliest times to the reign of Sultān Mahmūd, called *Kitāb fī Ghurar-i-Akhbār-i-Mulūk-ul-Furs*;† Abul Fazl Muhammad bin Hussaīn al-Baihaqī,‡ the

* On his refusal to accept Mahmūd's invitation, he was hunted down from place to place till at last he found a safe asylum with one of the Buwaihīd rulers of Ray, who was a great patron of Persian literature (*L H P*, 1, 96 ff.)

† Originally this work covered four volumes. Of them, only the first two have survived and the other two have disappeared. The two that have survived deal with the pre-Islāmic period and the Prophet Muhammad.

‡ For his life and work, see *Ency. of Islām*, 1, 592.

reputed author of the *Maḡamāt-i Abū Nasr-i Mushkānī*,* the *Majalladāt*† and a collection of important diplomatic correspondence of Sultān Mas'ūd and probably of Mahmūd as well, called *Zīnat-ul-Kuttab*;‡ Mahmūd-al-Warrāq, the author of a universal history ending with the year 1018 A. C.;§ and Hilāl bin Muḡassin bin Ibrāhīm as-Sabī, the author of the *Zail Taḡarīb-ul-Umam*, containing in detail the letters of victory sent by the Sultān to the Khalīfa of Baghdād.¶

* This work, now no longer extant, contained much useful information on the reign of Sultān Mahmūd, as is evident from the extracts preserved in the *Jawāmi-ul-Hikāyāt* and *Asār-ul-Wuzarā*

† This was a monumental work, covering as many as 30 volumes. It was a most comprehensive history of the Yamīnī Dynasty (Sultān Mahmūd and his successors), beginning from the year 1018 A. C., and coming down to 1068 A. C. Only the second half of the 6th volume and volumes 7-9 and a part of the 10th volume, dealing with the reign of Sultān Mas'ūd, are preserved and the rest lost. Several parts of this work were known after the names and titles of the Ghaznawid rulers. For instance, the part dealing with the reign of Mahmūd was named *Tārikh-i-Yamīnī* after his title (Yamīn-ud-Daulah) and that dealing with the reign of Mas'ūd was called *Tārikh-i-Mas'ūdī* after his name. The *Tārikh-i-Yamīnī* is a most valuable work and its importance lies in the fact that it was based on original State papers and a diary which its author used to keep.

‡ This work too has been lost (M. G., 2).

§ T. M., 317. Also see M. G., 3.

¶ A part of this chronicle, covering an account of three years (390-2 A. H.), has survived. It has been published by Professor D. S. Margolouth in the third volume of the *Taḡarīb-ul-Umam* of Abū 'Alī Ahmad bin Muḡammad Miskawaih.

As many as four hundred poets, with 'Unsari as the poet-laureate, were in constant attendance at the Ghaznawid Court, which, as such, was renowned all over Asia.* Their official duty was to sing the praises of the Sultān who, with all the stinginess attributed to him,† was exceedingly liberal in appreciating and rewarding the literary merits of these poets. Ghazāiri Rāzi, a poet from Rāy, received 14,000 *dirhams* for a *qasida* (eulogium) which cheered up the Sultān in the august assembly;‡ whereas the poet-laureate's mouth was thrice filled with pearls for an unpremeditated *qita'* (fragment).§

Among the Persian poets who flourished at Mahmūd's Court under his liberal patronage and shed gleams on his glorious reign, the first place is assigned by almost unanimous consent to Firdausi, the immortal Homer of the East and the celebrated author of the *Shāhnāmah*, though his stay at the Imperial Court was very short ¶ One of the most marvellous achievements of Persian literature and by far the grāndest production of the age, this epic poem is still admired for the kindling spirit that fires some passages, the

* T. S., 44; and T. F., 1, 39

† See *infra*, Chapter VI

‡ T. S., 33; and T. F., 1, 39

§ C. M., 63, and T. S., 33.

¶ *Vide infra*, pp 130 ff.

delicacy and tenderness that characterize others and the Homeric simplicity that pervades most of it. The most striking feature of the book was the absence of Arabic words and phrases, but it has undergone so many changes and suffered so much in diction that it is now conspicuous for the absence of this feature. The constructive genius of Firdausī achieved victories far more enduring than those of his master. The Ghaznawid Empire built by the latter crumbled to dust a decade after his death, but the *Shāhnāmāh*, the crowning achievement of Firdausī, will live for ever as a monument to his memory.

'Unsari,* the scientist, philosopher, linguist and, with the possible exception of Firdausī, the greatest genius of the age, next engages our attention.

'Unsari

He may be mentioned as the best instance of a man raised to honour and affluence for literary merits alone. His extemporaneous effusions, his odes and encomiums, his voluptuous metaphors and, above all, his pure and powerful diction, exquisitely polished and extremely charming, assign him a place second only to that of Firdausī in the history of Persian poetry. He versified the victories and conquests of Sultān Mahmūd, and this part of his work is very useful for historical purposes. In recognition of his services and in appreciation of his merits, he was

* His full name was Hasan bin Ahmad.

honoured with the title of *Malak-ush-Shu'arā* (poet-laureate) and entrusted with the work of looking through the poetical compositions of all the accomplished poets of the kingdom before being submitted to the Sultān. This enhanced his prestige and influence and also raised him to honour and title. He left behind a *diwān* of about 80,000 verses.*

Among other poets who flocked to Ghaznīn and flourished at the Imperial Court, Other poets. the most distinguished were Daqiqī, who had first undertaken the stupendous task of writing the *Shahnamah* and had composed more or less 1,000 verses, Ghazālī Rāzī, to whom a reference has already been made, Asadī Tūsī, the honoured teacher of Firdausī, who is said to have completed the *Shahnamah* by contributing as many as 4,000 verses, 'Asjadi Marvī, Farrukhī Tirmizī and Minūchihīr Balkhī †

The preceding account, though exceptionally brief and perfunctory, is, however, Criticism enough to convey the idea that the of poets. age of Sultān Mahmūd was an age of literary efflorescence when poetry in particular progressed by leaps and bounds. Some of the poets attached to the Ghaznawid Court, especially those referred to above, were renowned all

* Vide T. S., *Tabqa-i-Awwal*

† For a detailed account of these and many other poets, see *Ibid.*, L. H. P., 1 and 11; T. F., 1, 38-39; S. P. L., T. S.; and S. A., Vol. I.

over Asia and their presence at Ghaznīn, highly prized by the Sultān, was responsible for raising the reputation of the Imperial patron to the highest water-mark. It is true that mystic ideas had not yet gained a wide currency and the *Ghazal* had not yet been invented; and that the poetry, though brilliant, was not deep, yet the Ghaznawid poets possessed, in spite of their short-comings, a certain amount of freshness and candour which the succeeding generations of poets have frequently lacked.*

As a man of culture and refinement, endowed with an intuitive love of learning and an instinctive admiration for everything that is beautiful in art and literature, Mahmūd's magnanimity was not confined to literary sphere alone, but also found a most suitable expression in the establishment of such intellectual institutions as *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, mosques and monasteries, museums and libraries. He founded the celebrated "Celestial Bride"—a mosque of matchless beauty and grandeur—, built of marble and granite, at his capital and furnished with gold and silver lamps, candelabras, precious ornaments and costly carpets. This magnificent mosque was in that age "a wonder of the east"—a sobriquet which it richly deserved.† In the vicinity of this sacred structure the Sultān

* See *L H P*, 1, 11, *S. A*, 1, and *S. P. L.*

† *T F*, 1, 30; and *H. I.*, 292.

established a big university and provided it with a vast library and a fine museum. The library was stocked with numerous literary treasures in various languages and the museum enriched with invaluable antiquities. The mosque was surrounded by as many as 3,000 quarters, meant for the residence of teachers and students of the university. The teachers were paid regular salaries and the students were granted stipends and scholarships from the State funds and the income of the mosque and its endowments.*

Sultān Mahmūd had a fine taste for architecture. He spent huge sums of money on the construction of magnificent monuments with a view to beautify his beloved Ghaznīn. He imported distinguished architects from distant countries and employed them in giving a suitable expression to his architectural designs. His example was followed by his nobles who vied with one another and even emulated their king in erecting superb edifices. The result was that Ghaznīn became a nucleus of Islāmic architecture in Central Asia.†

Among the public works of a vast and varied description erected under the instructions of Sultān Mahmūd

* *Tārīkh-i-Ibn Khalkān*, II, 86, *T. F.*, I, 30, and *H. I.*, 290
† *T. F.*, I, 30, Indian as well as Persian architecture together — not one to the exclusion of the other — seems to have influenced Mahmūd's tastes for architecture. (*Vide C. H. I.*, III, 574).

may be mentioned aqueducts, reservoirs, cisterns, porches, bridges and dams. The most prominent of all these were a market at Balkh, a bridge over the Oxus and the Band-i-Sultān across the river Nawar, about eighteen miles north of Ghaznīn. Of these only the last-named has survived and that too, though still in use, is much damaged.*

Unfortunately, however, the Ghaznīn of these days is a complete contrast to the Ghaznīn of the days of Sultān Mahmūd. Once the historic capital of the great Ghaznawid Empire and the cradle of Islāmic culture, it is now a collection of *kacha* houses, wearing the appearance of an ordinary Afghān town of limited population. So complete in fact seems to have been the spoliation to which it was subjected by 'Alā-ud-Dīn Hussain, surnamed *Jahānsaz* or "world-burner", and later vandals that nothing but the tombs of a few kings, two towers of victory—one built by Mahmūd and the other by his son, Mas'ūd—, and the shrines of saints and savants have survived to give us an idea not so much of the glory that was Ghaznīn as of the misfortunes that befell it.†

* See *Ghaznī* in *E B*; *H. I. E. A*, 494-97, and *M G*, 166

† For some details on the architectural remains at Ghaznīn, see my article under the caption "*Impressions of Ghaznīn*" in *C & M G*, Lahore, dated the 1st September, 1938. Also see *H. I. E. A*, 494-97, *C H I*, iii, 574-75, and *E. B.*

The tomb of Amīr Subuktigīn is situated near the modern town of Ghaznīn on the Kābul-Ghaznīn Road. It is built of white marble and has a small but beautiful dome over it. Its epitaph is in Kūfic characters.* The *Rauzah* (tomb) of Sultān Mahmūd is further up on an elevation, having a modest garden around it† It is also built of white marble and is crowned with a newly constructed dome. Its epitaph is in Kūfic script, invoking the mercy of God on the noblest Amīr, the greatest king the Lord of Church and State, Abul Qāsim Mahmūd *bin* Subuktigīn. The outer gate, with a long corridor to the right, opening into the enclosure, seems to be a later addition. The doors that formerly adorned the tomb are now to be seen in the Agra Fort, where they were removed by the British in 1842 A. C. They

* This tomb is not mentioned by any modern writer. Even Sir J. Marshall, Dr J. Fergusson and Dr. M. Nāzım are silent about it. All that they have said about in their works are the tombs of Mahmūd and Mas'ūd and the two towers of victory. None of the notabilia other than these finds place in any modern work known to me. Even the *Encyclopædia Britannica* does not go beyond referring to the above mentioned tombs and towers. The little that is mentioned about these too seems to be based on hearsay reports and is therefore full of mistakes and inaccuracies. Compare it with my account in "*Impressions of Ghaznīn*", which is based on personal observations, and mark the mistakes.

† The village that has sprung up round the tomb is known as *Rauzah-i-Sultān*.

are made of *deodār* wood, richly carved and containing beautiful inscriptions in Kūfic script.* The tombs of three other kings, *vis*, Abdur Razzāq, Abdul Fateh and Ulūghbeg, are also situated in the same neighbourhood. They are crowned with a common dome. The names of the three kings are inscribed on a tile of white marble, which is fixed in a wall of the domed structure. Both the tombs and the dome are in a dilapidated state.†

* Mas'ūd had raised a beautiful mausoleum over this tomb and created vast endowments for its maintenance (T M, 310). The tomb was held in such esteem by the people that even the 'world-incendiary', 'Alā-ud-Dīn Hussain, did not include it in the wholesale destruction of Ghaznī ordered by him. "His tomb has however, suffered from the ravages of his Muslim admirers, who for ages have resorted to it for the purpose of seeking divine grace and have carried away to their homes fragments of wood or handfuls of earth as keep-sakes, from the sacrilege of the savage hordes of Hulāgū Khān, and in more recent times, from the misguided enthusiasm of Lord Ellenborough, who, believing that its gates were those of the temple of Somnāth, ordered them to be removed and brought back to India" (M G, 124, foot-note) "Once a grand edifice", the tomb became a cluster of "dilapidated ruins" later on and has been repaired and renovated by the Afghān Government only recently. It is no longer in "dilapidated ruins", as stated by Dr M Nāzīm (M G, 167 and 124, f. n)

The legend that the gates of the tomb had been taken away by Mahmūd from Somnāth is devoid of historical foundation and is fantastically absurd (H I E A, 495, f n).

† Some scholars have omitted these tombs and mentioned those of Mas'ūd and Ibrāhīm, which I could not trace

The two Towers of Victory, referred to above, stand on the Kābul-Ghaznīn Road, just in front of the Tomb of Subuktigīn. About six decades ago they were quite intact and at that time they were double-storied, the upper stories being round and the lower star-shaped, both together rising to a height of about 140 feet. The upper stories have since fallen and tin-roofs and square-bases have been added—the former to protect the structures against ravages of rain and snow and the latter to prevent it from falling down. The steps leading to the tops are so badly broken as to form a winding steep slope, rendering ascent to the tops not only difficult but also dangerous. At present there are no inscriptions either inside or outside the towers. Those showing whom they were built by must have, therefore, been either on the upper stories which have fallen or at the bottoms to which new bases have been added. Both the *Minars* are identical in form, size and construction, and display exquisite designs in *terra-cotta*. They are fair prototypes of the *Qutb Minār* of Delhi.*

even after persistent inquiries from local guides during my visit to Ghaznīn (1938). I have not yet been able to verify the identity of the said three kings.

* Dr. M. Nāzım seems to have based his account of these two Towers of Victory and the Tomb of Sultān Mahmūd on the incomplete and inaccurate accounts of Dr J. Fergusson and Sir J. Marshall and hence repeated their errors in his scholarly monograph on *Mahmūd of Ghazna*. (pp 124. f n and 167).

Quite close to the city is a cluster of tombs surrounded by orchards and vine-yards. The most prominent of these tombs are those of Ramzān *bin* Yūsuf alias Shāh Rūm, Majdūd* alias Hakīm Sanāi and Khāqān†—all lying side by side under a common dome which is a later addition. Sa'di's famous poem in Arabic, extolling the virtues of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islām, is inscribed on the tomb of Sanāi‡. Among numerous other tombs that are interspersed in the valley may be mentioned those of Bahlol Dānā, Shams-ul-'Arifīn, Jam-i-Auliyā and Shaikh 'Attār. Most of the shrines that have survived have lost all marks of recognition and cannot be identified at this distant date.§

* The full name of this famous poet-philosopher was Abul Majd Majdūd *bin* Adam al-Sanāi (T. S).

† His full name was Abul Fuzalā Afzal-ud-Dīn Khāqānī (T. S).

‡ The opening verses of this poem are —

بلغ العلى كما له - كشف الدجى بجماله
حسنت جميع خصاله - صلوا عليه و آله

§ It may be noted here that the Afghān Government is deeply interested in the preservation of these sacred remains and relics of the past and its interest has found a most suitable expression in the repairs and renovation of architectural remains lying scattered all over Afghānistān.

CHAPTER VI

SULTAN MAHMUD THE GREAT—V

SOME LEGENDS ABOUT HIM

A number of anecdotes are afloat about Sultān Mahmūd's career and character. Few of them have yet been subjected to the rigours of criticism and the result is that they are freely quoted by competent scholars as well as by mediocres to illustrate certain traits of Mahmūd's character.* Of them, the four most famous legends that have gained a wide currency and given birth to a series of wild charges against Mahmūd are those about Firdausī, Ayāz, the idol of Somnāth and the two Dābīsh-lims. Here it is proposed to take up these four legends, to scrutinize them at some length and to examine their sources, because they are responsible for giving a wide vogue to some curious notions about Mahmūd's character and work

* Dr M. Nāzīm has dealt with some of these stories and tried to expose their spuriousness in his learned monograph on *Mahmūd of Ghazna* (pp 219 ff), but about Firdausī and Ayāz he has contented himself by drawing the attention of his reader to the articles of Professor M Khān Shīrānī in the "Urdū" (quarterly journal) about Mahmūd's relations with Firdausī and characterizing Mahmūd's "attachment" to Ayāz as based on latter's "extraordinary devotion" and not on "good looks" despite the fact that both these stories have done much harm to the reputation of his hero.

We take the legend of Firdausī first. It is to the effect that this famous poet was commissioned by Sultān Mahmūd for writing the *Shāhnāmāh* (*Book of Kings*) in poetry and promised a gold *dīnār* for each verse composed; that when the great epic was completed the Sultān paid the poet in silver instead of the promised gold; that the poet refused to accept the baser metal, retired from the Imperial Court in disgust and composed a satire against his niggardly patron; that sometime later the Sultān repented of his cavil and sent more than the promised money to Firdausī; that the poet was no longer in the land of the living at that time; and that the poet had a daughter whom the money was offered but she refused to accept it. Taking their cue from this story and the satire, some stupid scholars have gone even so far as to declare that Mahmūd "was a bastard" and others, *e g* Sir W. Haig, have contented themselves with the statement that he was "the son of a concubine and not a regularly married wife", while all are almost invariably agreed on the charge of avarice

Professor M. Habīb has also written a book on Mahmūd, but he has quietly passed over these stories. In a foot-note (*S M G*, 62) he has referred to the articles of Professor Shīrānī. There is, thus, no work in English in which these stories have been subjected to a critical examination. I have, therefore, thought it proper to devote some space to them. I may add here that I have not had the opportunity of reading Professor Shīrānī's articles despite sounding all possible sources.

and breach of promise against him.

Almost all the available sources of this story are materially discrepant and contradictory. They differ in almost all details. Even the name, nativity, parentage, dates of birth and death of Firdausī as well as of commencement and completion of the *Shāhnāmāh* by him, his age and education, his life and religious beliefs, nay the number of verses that the *Shāhnāmāh* contained, the circumstances that surrounded Firdausī's access to the Imperial Court and presentation of the book as well as Mahmūd's order to write that book and his perfidy and final repentance are differently given in different accounts*. In the presence of such a confused mass of conflicting and contradictory evidence it is wholly unsafe to accept the story at its face value.

Secondly, there is absolutely no reference to the story in the chronicles of the contemporary Persian and Arab historians who have left behind detailed accounts of the reign of Sultān Mahmūd. The Persian historian, 'Ainī, who was a contemporary of Sultān Mahmūd, says nothing about it. The celebrated author of the *Alhund o Malahum Min Maqāla Maqbūl*, another contemporary critic of Mahmūd, who was so unsparing and even unnecessarily

* *Vide M F*, 34 ff; and *L.H.P.*, II, 129 ff.

extravagant in his criticism that he must have fully exploited the story and the satire only if they had been correct and current in his times, makes no mention of it. In short, the whole of the contemporary historical literature is silent on the subject and no writer of that age has even alluded to it. How, it may then be asked, did the story originate and gain currency subsequently? The story first appears in the *Chahār Maqāla*, where it is not based on any authority.* It is from this solitary source that the story must have been reproduced in the subsequent literature. It is necessary to note here that the book just referred to was written by Nizāmī al-'Arūzī, a court-poet of the Ghūrīds, about 150 years after the death of Sultān Mahmūd and the probability is that it was concocted by him in order to please his patrons, the Ghūrīds, between whom and the Ghaznawids existed a bitter enmity; or if it was not his work, it might have been incorporated in his book later on, for the literature of that age and of the age that followed is not entirely unmixed and intact.† Again, the *Chahār Maqāla* is full of historical mistakes and mis-statement of facts ‡

* C M, 72, ff.

† The *Diwān-i-Hāfiz*, the *Gulistān* and the *Kulliyāt-i-Shams Tabrāz* are the instances in point. One reason for the changes in the books of those times, as apart from malicious intentions, is that literature suffered enormously during the tumultuous times that followed the death of Mahmūd. Changes such as we have come across may have crept in while the books were rewritten.

‡ Vide M F., 27, ff.

At present there are several *MSS.* of this book and they are all full of material discrepancies. Even the authorship of the book is a subject of controversy*. It is therefore unsafe to place implicit reliance on what is stated in it and is not supported by other sources. Yet again, the language and style of the story of '*Mahmūd and Firdausī*' are quite different from those of the other contents of the book (*Chahār Maqāla*), so much so that they cannot be attributed to one and the same author. Anyone acquainted with Persian language and literature will easily discover the difference and find that the language and style in which the story is written are far inferior to those of the book in general †. Almost everywhere in the book Mahmūd's name is mentioned with respect but not so in the story. The absence of the story in the literature of a period no less than a century and a half also shows that it is a later fabrication. The story itself is not free from flaws. For instance, Nizāmī al-'Arūzī, the author of the *Chahār Maqāla*, informs us that Firdausī was a man of means and lived a comfortable life, ‡ while Firdausī himself complains of his poverty §. At another place in the same story al-'Arūzī says

* *M F*, 24

† *Ibid*, 32-3

‡ *C M*, 77

§ The relevant verses are -

و دیگر که گنجم و فادار بیست - مرادن رنج را کس خریدار نیست
مرا نحل و حورا نرا نر ندے - زمانه مرا چون نرا نر ندے

that on his way back from Hindūstān Mahmūd was reminded of the fate of poor Firdausī, whose work had not been duly appreciated and who had left the Imperial Court in utter disappointment; that Mahmūd asked one of his servants to remind him of it at Ghaznīn and he would do something for the poet; that on reaching Ghaznīn the Sultān was reminded of Firdausī, whereupon he sent indigo worth 60,000 *dīnārs* to the poet, and that the indigo was taken to him from one gate of the city while his corpse was being taken to the graveyard from another.* Obviously this episode relates to the time of Firdausī's death, which took place in 411 A. H. One may therefore say that in the year 411 A. H. Mahmūd was coming back from Hindūstān. But there is nothing to corroborate this and we know-for certain that Mahmūd undertook no expedition against India in the year 411 A. H. In the same story Nizāmī al-'Arūzī says that he visited the Tomb of Firdausī in 510 A. H., but does not say that he was told anything about the story † According to his own statement, he visited Nishāpur in 540 A. H., i. e., thirty years after visiting Firdausī's Tomb, and received details of it from Amīr Mā'zī ‡ This is incredible, for if the story had been correct or current in those days, the *Mujāwar* (man in charge) of Firdausī's Tomb must have known it

* C M, 81-82.

† *Ibid*, p 82

‡ *Ibid*, p. 81.

and told it to al-'Arūzī, as is the usual practice. Evidently the story was fabricated later on.

Thirdly it is a question whether the *Shāhnāmah* was undertaken by Firdausī at the instance of Sultān Mahmūd. According to Firdausī, the *Shāhnāmah* was completed in 400 A H. (=1010 A C.) and it took him 30 or 35 years to complete it.* From this we infer that the work was started in $(400-30=)$ 370 A H (=880 A C.) or $(400-35=)$ 365 A H. (=975 A C.), i. e., it was started $(388-370=)$ 18 years or $(388-365=)$ 23 years before Mahmūd's accession, which took place in 388 A H. The conclusion therefore is that Firdausī was not appointed by Mahmūd for writing the *Shāhnāmah*. This conclusion is confirmed by other considerations also: Mahmūd's reign extended over 33 years and the composition of the *Shāhnāmah* took 35 years. Therefore, the work was started either 2 years before Mahmūd's accession

* The verses showing that the *Shāhnāmah* was completed in 400 A H are -

رهبرت شده پنج بهشتاد نار - که گفتم من این نامه شهریار
The verses showing that it was completed in 35 years are -

سی سال و پنج از سرائے سپنج - چنین رنج بردم نه امید گنج
چو بر باد دادند گنج مرا - بدد حاصلے سی و پنج مرا

The verses showing that it was completed in 30 years are
سیه رنج بردم دریں سال سی - عجم رنده کردم بدین فارسی

or 2 years after his death. In one case it was not undertaken at Mahmūd's orders and in the other case it was not completed and presented to him during his lifetime. As the weight of evidence is in favour of the fact that the *Shāhnāmāh* was presented at the Court of Mahmūd, one cannot resist the alternate conclusion that it was undertaken by Firdausī on his own account and not at the request of Mahmūd. Assuming for the sake of argument that the *Shāhnāmāh* was written under Mahmūd's orders and assuming also that it was started from the very date of his accession (388 A. H.), it was then completed in $(388+35=)$ 423 A. H. This would mean that it was completed $(423-420=)$ 3 years after Mahmūd's death and $(423-411=)$ 12 years or $(423-417=)$ 6 years after Firdausī's death, 411 A. H. and 417 A. H. being the two dates of his death mentioned in the *Shāhnāmāh*. This also is impossible. Again, there is a verse in the *Shāhnāmāh* which means that the author, after completing the work, kept it with him for 20 years in order to find a suitable patron for it*. Adding this period of 20 years to that of 35 years, during which the work was completed, and subtracting the whole $(20+35=55)$ from 400, the year when it was completed, we get $(400-55=)$ 345 A. H. as the date of commencing it. In other words, the book was started $(388-345=)$ 43 years before Mahmūd's accession

* The verse referred to above is —

سختن را نگه داشتم سال بیست - که بیستم سرا وار این گنج گیسست

or $(361-345=)$ 16 years before his birth, the years 388 A. H. and 361 A. H. being his dates of accession and birth respectively. If we accept the period spent in the writing of the *Shāhnāmāh* as 30 years, then according to the above calculations, it was started 38 years before Mahmūd's accession and 11 years before his birth. This too is absurd. And, if 389 A. H. * is accepted as the correct date of completion of the *Shāhnāmāh*, then according to the above calculations, it was started in $(389-50=)$ 339 A. H., i. e. $(388-339=)$ 49 years before Mahmūd's accession (388) or $(361-339=)$ 22 years before his birth. Here the period of completion of the *Shāhnāmāh* is taken to be 30 years. If it is taken to be 35 years, then according to the above calculations, the writing of the *Shāhnāmāh* was undertaken 43 years before Mahmūd's accession and 17 years before his birth. This is no less absurd. Other dates of completion of the book are 371, 384, 391 A. H. and the periods during which it was completed are 6, 13, 15 and 25. The results will be more discouraging if the date of starting the *Shāhnāmāh* is worked out on their basis according to the above calculations. Furthermore, Firdausī says that his age was about 80 in the year 400 A. H.† That is to say, he was born in $(400-$

* This is according to the verse —

اگر سال ... آمد است - بهم سال و هشتاد و سی صد است

† At the end of the *Shāhnāmāh*, which was completed in 400 A. H., Firdausī says —

کنون عمر نزدیک هشتاد شد - امیدم یک بار بر باد شد

80=) 320 A. H. He also states that he completed the *Shāhnāmāh* in 371* A. H., that it took him 35 years to complete it, and that he kept it with himself for 20 years after completing it. Deducting from 371 a period of $(35+20=)$ 55 years we get $(371-55=)$ 316 A. H., as the date when the *Shāhnāmāh* was started. In other words, the book was started $(320-316=)$ 4 years before his birth (320 A. H.). If we take 30 years as the time occupied in the writing of the *Shāhnāmāh*, then according to the above calculations, he started writing the book in $(371-50=)$ 321 A. H., i. e. as soon as he was born. According to Firdausī himself, he was about 80 in 400 A. H. when the *Shāhnāmāh* was completed. That is to say, he was 79 years old at that time. According to 'Allāma Shiblī, Firdausī did not live longer than four years after the completion of the *Shāhnāmāh* † His age may, therefore, be said to have been $(79+4=)$ 83 years. According to a statement, Firdausī's arrival at the Imperial Court is proved to have been at the age of 85. ‡ This would mean that Firdausī visited the Court 2 years after his death. A further corroboration of what is stated above is found in the verses of the *Shāhnāmāh* which mean that Firdausī commenced the work at Tūs where he was provided with the historical material for the work in the

* M F, 68

† S A, 1, 105

‡ M. F, 78

form of a book called *Pāstān-Nāmāh** by an intimate friend of his, named Muhammad Lashkarī. Again, while Firdausī was writing the *Shāhnāmāh*, he enjoyed the patronage of Abū Mansūr, Hussain *bin* Qatīb and Arslān Khān, the governors of Tūs.† Why should he receive the patronage of these persons when he had already found a patron in Mahmūd? It is quite obvious that he had not yet seen Mahmūd what to say of his appointment by him for writing the book. Furthermore, the first edition of the book is said to have been completed in 389 A. H. and dedicated to a certain notable of Khālānjān (in Isfahān), named Ahmad *bin* Muhammad *bin* Abī Bakr al-Isfahānī ‡ If the *Shāhnāmāh* had been written at the request of Sultān Mahmūd, it would not have been dedicated to Ahmad in 389 A. H. before its presentation to Mahmūd. Firdausī is stated to have visited Mahmūd's Court

* The relevant verses are :

نه شهرم يکے مهربان دوست برد - تو گفتی که نامن نه یک پوست بود
مرا گشت خوب آمد این رائے تو - نه بیکی حرامد مگر پائے تو
بوشتر من این نامنه پهلوی - نه پیش تو آرم مگر معنوی
تو این قصر حصرواں نارگو - بدین حوے روز مهیاں آرو
چون آورد این نامنه نزدیک من - نه ابروخت ابن حان تارنگ من

† *M F*, 67, *LHP*, II, 133. ‡ The relevant verses are :-

گر ایامیہ احمد که هم سال او - بگوید نهو حارو آل او
رناش حولی تو نام درست - ابو نکر آخر محمود بخت
حداوند این دفتر نداده کرد - لب هر مرادم پیر از حیده کرد
که مردوسی طوسی پاک حفت - نه این نامنه در نام محمود گشت

at the age of 85, *i. e.*, just before his death, then who worked at the *Shāhnāmāh* for 30 or 35 years, if we suppose that it was undertaken at the instance of Mahmūd, and how could it be presented at the Ghaznawid Court during the lifetime of Mahmūd? Obviously there was no question of appointment and hence no question of promise, perfidy and repentance. Finally, the author of the *Chahar Maqālā*, which is the first source of information, does not say that Mahmūd had appointed Firdausī for writing the *Shāhnāmāh*. Later writers, who have made further embellishments on the story, have made this addition without citing any authority and hence cannot be believed to have told the truth. When the *Shāhnāmāh* was presented to Mahmūd, he is said to have asked his courtiers what reward he should give to its author.* If Mahmūd had appointed Firdausī to do that work and made a promise regarding his remuneration, he would not have put such a question to his courtiers. Moreover, Firdausī never referred to his appointment by Mahmūd for writing the *Shāhnāmāh* or to Mahmūd's promise and perfidy when he explained his case to the ruler of Tabaristān and Amīr Abul Muzaffar Nasr, the brother of Sultān Mahmūd. Finally, the task of writing the *Shāhnāmāh* was first undertaken by Daqīqī who is said to have composed as many as 1,000 verses before he left the task.† If this is correct, the

* C M, 79

† T. F., I, 39

story of Firdausi's appointment and Mahmūd's promise and perfidy falls to the ground.

Fourthly, the *Shāhnāmah* has suffered a great deal and undergone many changes since it was completed.* In the first place, the authorship of the whole of the *Shāhnāmah*, as it has come down to us, cannot be attributed to Firdausi alone, for two other poets of distinction have contributed a goodly number of verses to it. According to the *Tazkara-i-Haft Aqlim* and the *Majma-ul-Fusahā*, it contains 1,000 verses of Daqiqi†—a fact which Firdausi frankly admits and acknowledges the contribution with thanks ‡ According to Ferishta, the *Shāhnāmah* was completed by Asadi Tusī who contributed 4,000 verses § The *Aṭishkade-i-Asar* also corroborates the above version in all details ¶ Professor Browne says that it was the second edition of the *Shāhnāmah* which was presented at the Court of Mahmūd || This is quite consistent with the testimony adduced above. If this is correct, the story of Mahmūd's appointment of Firdausi, promise of

* M F, 45 ff

† Ferishta also supports this (See T.F, 1, 62)

‡ The verses embodying this fact are —

رگستاسپ و ار حاسپ بیته هزار - نگفت و سر آمد و را دورگار
پر یوفتم و در شتم رو سباس - مرا در دل آمد و هر سوهراس

§ T F, 1, 61

¶ L H P., 11, 141

|| M F, 44 ff, and 65 ff

a *dinār* for each verse and perfidy loses all force of reality and takes the form of fiction. Secondly, Firdausi's mastery of the Persian language was universally acknowledged and he always expressed himself in Persian without invoking the aid of the Arabic language; and hence the most important and distinctive feature of the *Shāhnāmāh* was the absence of Arabic words. But the existing *MSS* of the book are free from this convention, for they contain a number of Arabic words and phrases. At present there are many *MSS.* of the *Shāhnāmāh* and, though the book is universally believed to contain 60,000 verses, no two of the existing *MSS.* contain the same number of verses. That written by Muhammad Khān Qazwīnī contains 42,000 verses, others have more than this and the one written in 810 A H, *i. e.* 410 years after the completion of the book and is perhaps the oldest of all that have survived, contains as many as 87,911 verses, of which 7,000 are in praise of Baghdād. Why so many verses in praise of Baghdād and not Ghaznīn is an objection which, like many others, need not be dilated upon here. Suffice it to say here that the presence of so many *MSS.*, containing different number of verses and different accounts, renders the authenticity as well as authorship of the book highly apocryphal. Again there are many historical mistakes in the *Shāhnāmāh* as it has come down to us, *e g.*, Parīchehra is spoken of as the grand-daughter of Iraj, whereas in fact she was his daughter; the murderers of Dārā are stated to have been two *Wasīrs*, named Nasar and

Halosar, though in fact they were two soldiers of Hamadān.* There are a large number of discrepancies and even contradictions in all the the existing MSS. of the book.† Furthermore, there are serious literary and poetical defects which cannot escape the notice of anyone conversant with Persian language and literature ‡ These are defects and drawbacks which cannot be attributed to such a competent poet and well-informed scholar as Firdausī. Such, in short, is the extent of changes which the *Shahnamah* has undergone that Allāma Lutf 'Alī Azar has good grounds to doubt if it still retains any verses of Firdausī at all. Under the circumstances, it is not safe to hold him responsible for the whole book as we have it or to say that it was written by him at the instance and under the patronage of Sultān Mahmūd.§ And, whatever the merits and

* *Vide M F.*, 50

† *Ibid* , pp 56 ff.

‡ *Ibid* , pp 51-53

§ It appears to me that the story of the famous Arabian poet, called Lubaid 'Amrī, and Amīr Mu'āwīya was moulded into that of 'Mahmūd and Firdausī' by some ingenious writer, with necessary changes, and fathered on Nizāmī al-Arūzī. Khalīfa 'Umar had granted a monthly allowance of 300 *dirhams* to Lubaid 'Amrī for his poetic talents. This monthly allowance was increased by 100 *dirhams* by the succeeding Khalīfas, 'Usmān and 'Alī. When Mu'āwīya became Khalīfa, he diminished the allowance, which the poet refused to accept. Later, the Khalīfa repented of his act, increased the allowance and sent the arrears to the poet. It is stated that the money reached the place of the poet, when his dead body was

short-comings of the present *Shahnamah*, there is no doubt that it is a book of poetry and cannot therefore be free from exaggeration, and we cannot arrive at correct conclusions as long as due allowance is not made for this element. If Mahmūd did not live up to his words on account of his miserliness, as alleged, why did he repent and send the promised amount with other presents to the poet after he had left the Imperial Court and composed a most trenchant satire on the Sultan? The satire would have enraged the Sultān and furnished a *casus belli* for wreaking a vengeance on him. Far from repenting and rewarding him, Mahmūd must have hunted him down and impaled him without compassion if he had in fact written that satire.

Let us now turn to the satire and see if it was really written by Firdausī. As The Satire apart from the cumulative evidence adduced above, there are other considerations that confirm our doubts, so much so that we cannot attribute its authorship to that poet. We learn from the *Chahār Maqala*, which is the only source drawn upon by later writers about the legend of 'Mahmūd and Firdausī' and the 'satire' that originally the satire consisted of 100 verses and that all of them, except six, were destroyed by the King of Tabaristān with his

being carried to the graveyard. The deceased had a daughter, to whom the amount was given, but she refused to accept it. (See translator's note in *I K*, II, 211, 268-69)

consent and that the original MS. was also destroyed by Firdausī*. The exception of the six verses is not accounted for. How they escaped and why they too were not subjected to the same fate as that meted out to their fellows is a question which must always remain open to grave doubts. With the march of time these six verses multiplied by giving birth to many more, so that at present they are over 200. Where have these 194 verses come from?† The *Chahār Maqāla* is the only source and there only six verses are given. The rest are therefore later additions, without authority. Moreover, the surviving six verses referred to are such that they cannot be called a satire. At the most they purport to be a complaint which the author never meant to be offensive. They do not contain unbecoming statements. As against this the rest of the verses are full of indecent personal remarks, and contain incorrect and even contradictory statements‡. Such lapses of scholarship as these cannot be expected from a genius of the calibre of Firdausī, who was universally acknowledged as *Khudāwand-i-Skhan* (Master of Poetry) and *Mahur-i-Tārikh* (competent historian). At one place it is said: "If the father of the Shāh (King) had been a *Shah*, he would

* C M, 80-81, L. H. P, II, 139

† It is a matter of speculation. To me it appears that these verses were composed by different poets at the instance of some king or influential man in order to vilify Mahmūd

‡ Vide M. F, 103 ff.

have put a crown on my head, and if his mother had been a Bānū (lady of noble birth) he would have covered me with gold and silver up to my knees'.* Now who does not know that Mahmūd was the son of Amīr Subuktigīn from his wife who was the daughter of no less a person than an Amīr of Zābulistān? Is it not a historical blunder or rather the height of absurdity to say that he was not the son of a king and a queen? Going further, the above statement is thus contradicted "The son of a concubine will do no good even if he be the son of a king" Here Mahmūd is spoken of as the son of a concubine, which is too foolish a remark to comment upon, and is also admitted as the son of a *Shahryār* (king) as against the previous statement in which he is not † The satire also contains verses in praise of the Sultān, which shows that it was not the work of one man. It also contains a number of Arabic words, which is quite contrary to the practice of Firdausī who always used strictly Persian words and expressions. There are also in the satire idioms and expressions which were not in vogue in his times. Finally, the language and the style of the satire are far inferior to those employed by him in his *Shāhnāmāh*. Evidently the satire, fathered on Firdausī, is not his work. If he had

* The verses translated here are —

اگر شاه را شاه بود پدر - سرم بر نهاد مرا تاج در
 و اگر مادر شاه نابو بد - مرا سیم و زر تا نه را بود

† The verse translated here is —

پرستار راده نه آید کار - اگر چه بود راده شهریار

in fact been the author of it, he would not have written verses at the mosque in praise of the Sultan and about his own bad luck.*

The sum and substance of the above discussion is that both the story and the satire are false and frivolous, concocted with no other intention than to create an aversion against one of the greatest personalities of the world. Those who charge Mahmūd of avarice and greed forget his munificence which was so widely and liberally enjoyed. The theory of niggardliness, based on the fantastically absurd legend of '*Firdausi and Mahmūd*' is fully negatived by the fact that he spent huge sums of money on the construction of public works. If he knew how to collect wealth, he also knew how to spend it. Those who say that Firdausi was a Shia' and it was for this reason that Mahmūd deprived him of 'the promised reward' should know that Mahmūd's patronage was enjoyed by all and sundry, irrespective of race or religion, that a king who appreciated merits from whatever source they emanated and rewarded them with

* The verses referred to above are —

حکمت در گه محمود را بلی درناست
چون دریا که اورا کنار پدید آیدست
چو عظمه را دم زاندر او دیدم در
گناه بخت من است این گناه دریا بدست

Note that in these verses Mahmūd is referred to as 'Mahmūd-i-Zābuli, because his mother was the daughter of an *Amir* of Zābulistān.

cavil cannot be said to have deprived Firdausī of his due on that score, and that the Sultān was quite favourably inclined towards the Shīas and had given two daughters of his in marriage to two Shīa' Princes named Mīnūchīhr *bin* Qabūs and 'Unsar-ul-Ma'ālī Kaikāūs.* The mere mole out of which a huge mountain has been made is that Firdausī was charged with "Carmathian heresy" and imprisoned at the instigation of hostile courtiers who bore him bitter jealousy. At a time when there existed a bitter enmity between the Sultān and the Carmathians, when most of the leaders of the Carmathians were the residents of Tūs, the native place of Firdausī, when Firdausī was found to have connections with the Dailamites, who had given protection to the Carmathians and when he had received a rich reward from Fakhr-ud-Daulah, the Dailamite, it was not difficult to substantiate the charge—a charge on which many had lost their lives. When released at the request of friendly court-poets, Firdausī went to Mahmūd's brother for a recommendation, explained his position to him and said that he had suffered through the machinations of a jealous courtier who had instigated the Sultān against him before the latter had cast a glance at the contents of the book.†

* M F, 36 ff, M G, 152

† This is evident from the following verses of the *Shāhnāmāh* —

چنین شهریارے کہ بخشیدہ - نہ گیتی ر شاہاں در حشدہ
 نہ کرد اندر این داستانها نگاه - ر بد گور بد بکب آمد نگاه

Why did Firdausī go to Mahmūd's brother for a recommendation when he had left the Court in disgust and composed such a satire as has come down to us? If he had composed the satire, how could he come back safely from a person none other than Sultān's own brother? Obviously, there was no question of appointment and reward for writing the *Shahnamah*.*

The story that can be reconstructed after reshuffling the conflicting and contradictory mass of evidence that has come down to us is that Firdausī wrote a major portion of the *Shahnamah* at his own sweet will and was in search of a patron; that with the help of the Governor of Tūs he had access to the Court of Mahmūd, that there he would have made a fortune if he had not fallen a victim to the jealousy of hostile courtiers; that he was charged with 'Carmathian

حسد برد بد گوے در کار من - تہ شد بر شاه نازار من
بد اندیش را روے بیکی مباد - سخنہائے نیکم بد بد کرد یاد

Al-'Arūzī, the author of the *Chahār Maqāla*, who is responsible for the story of Firdausī, thus writes at one place

”نظم او (مردوسی) اکر سلطان محمود داستہ بودے ہما
نا کہ آن آراد مرد را معزوم و مایوس نگذاشتے“ (C M., 55)

Evidently al-Arūzī does not charge Mahmūd of avarice

* Dr. M. Nāzım is wrong in saying that "Firdausī composed a large portion of his immortal *Shāhnāmah* at his (Mahmūd's) Court, and probably at his request, but his work did not receive proper recognition . . ." (M. G., 158) *Vide Supra*, pp 130 ff

heresy' and imprisoned; that on his release he sought the recommendation of Mahmūd's brother but failed in his object and died in disappointment in his home at Tūs; and that he left the *Shāhnāmāh* incomplete, which was completed by 'Asadī

While we are still about the story and the satire, it is necessary to make a short reference to the charge of 'bastardy' laid against Sultān Mahmūd. But for the fact that European scholars are too apt to accept all that is against the Muslim Kings as correct and reject all that is in their favour as fiction founded on flattery and that the rigours of their criticism are one-sided, confined only to the bright side of the picture, stories and satires such as we have dealt with would have vanished instead of gaining such a wide currency. Accepting the story and the satire at their face value without subjecting them to a critical examination, they have not only charged Mahmūd of stinginess but have also challenged his legitimacy by declaring him a bastard*. In his account of Sultān Mahmūd, Sir W. Haig tries to exonerate the Sultān of the blame of bastardy and defends him at the cost of Islām by saying that "he (Mahmūd) seems to have been the son of a concubine" and arguing that "by the law of Islām the son of a concubine or handmaiden is as legitimate as the son of a regularly married wife"† Here the

* Brigg's *Ferishta*, i, 29, foot-note

† *C. H. I*, iii, 27

learned writer betrays a superficial knowledge of the laws of Islām and Muslim history and an utter lack of critical perception. In the first place, Mahmūd was not the son of a concubine, but of a mother who was the daughter of an Amīr of Zābulistān, *regularly married* to his father ; * and secondly, according to the laws of Islām, the son of a concubine cannot be "as legitimate as the son of a regularly married wife," as our mis-informed friend would have us believe.†

* I have used the words "*regularly married*" because there is no evidence to the contrary. There is no evidence to the contrary because there was nothing uncommon about the marriage of Mahmūd's mother. Had there been anything unusual about it, it must have been made much of by the enemies of the Sultān. My conclusion is also confirmed by the fact that Mahmūd was known as 'Mahmūd-i-Zābulī' after his mother who was the daughter of an Amīr of Zābulistān, and if there had been any slur about her marriage his court-poets would never have called him 'Mahmūd-i-Zābulī'.

† Concubinage means sexual connection with a woman not holding the legal status of a wife or keeping a woman in the capacity of a wife without contracting *Nikāh* (regular marriage) with her. The practice was common in pre-Islamic Arabia and might have also been in vogue among some Muslims before the revelation of the verse making the marriage of male as well as female slaves compulsory. No master of a slave-girl could keep her as a concubine without violating the injunction embodied in the said verse. In the Holy Book 'ownership' is not recognized as validating or legalizing sexual intercourse. The only thing that legalizes sexual relationship is marriage duly performed. The conditions governing the marriage of a slave-girl are the same as those applicable in the case of a free

Another equally fantastic and absurd story is that relating to Mahmūd and Ayāz. This story has latterly provided a most popular theme for literary compositions in prose as well as poetry. It is said that Ayāz was a most handsome youth and hence an object of Mahmūd's passionate love and veneration. Briefly stated, the story is as follows: "The love which Sultān Mahmūd cherished for Ayāz exceeded all limits, but there was no tinge of sensuality in it * One day, when wine was being served in a banquet, Mahmūd drank beyond sobriety and lost his consciousness. In that state of drunkenness his eyes fell on Ayāz's interwoven curly locks, hanging down on his face, and, losing control over himself, he threw his arms round the boy's neck, but soon woke up and, in his zeal for piety, ordered Ayāz to cut down his locks and his orders were at once obeyed by

woman, with the addition that the consent of the master, in addition to that of the girl, must be obtained. Sexual intercourse with a slave-girl is lawful only when a regular *Nikāh* is contracted with her. Thus the son of a concubine cannot be "as legitimate as that of a regularly married wife", as our misinformed friend would have us believe. (See *Al-Qur-ān*, xxiv, 32)

* Dr M. Nāzim has apparently accepted the story as true but characterized Mahmūd's love for Ayāz as true and based on the latter's "extraordinary devotion" and not on "his good looks". Here he has not used that critical acumen which he has so prominently displayed in other parts of his learned monograph on Mahmūd. He seems to have followed Allāma Shiblī and his followers (See *M G*, 153).

the boy **

The *Chahār Maqāla* is the oldest work in prose in which the story appears, and it is most probably from this solitary source that it has been reproduced by later historians and modern writers.† Nothing needs now be said about the merits of the book whose authenticity has been successfully challenged by competent scholars and whose defects have been exposed in the preceding pages.‡ Reading through the story, one cannot help being struck with the following points, viz., (1) that Mahmūd was a drunkard whose parties were characterized by wine-drinking, (2) that he lost control over himself at the sight of Ayāz and fell a prey to carnal love inclining towards unnatural gratification of sexual appetite, and (3) that he gained control over himself in that state of drunkenness and, moved by piety, ordered Ayāz to cut down his locks as if they were responsible for the episode. In order to see how far the story is correct, it is necessary to examine these three points, two of which amount to very serious charges against Mahmūd's moral character and the third is a ridicu-

* This is a quotation from Allāma Shiblī's *Shir-ul-'Ajam*. I have reproduced the story in his words in order to show how the story has escaped critical examination and hence misled scholars of established repute.

† C M, 61-64. The story also finds place in the *Kulliyāt-i-Attār*, but being written about a century after the *Chahār Maqāla*, it is reasonable to suppose that it has borrowed it from the same source, i. e., *Chahār Maqāla*.

‡ See *supra*, pp. 132 ff.

lous contradiction of facts. The first is a charge of drunkenness, which must be dismissed as false in the presence of more reliable and weighty evidence pointing to Mahmūd's piety.* It is almost universally admitted that Mahmūd was a most pious man who kept company with men of piety and learning and never indulged in mean pleasures prohibited by the *Shariyat* (Islamic law). Once it is admitted that Mahmūd was a pious man and a staunch follower of his faith, it would be impossible to imagine that he was a habitual drunkard, as depicted in the story. The correctness of the second charge, which is a most heinous one, depends upon the correctness of the first charge. If the first charge falls, the second cannot stand. In the case of a drunkard and in a state of drunkenness, the animal in the man may come out and appear in all its nakedness, but a man who never indulged in licentious debauchery—a man whose piety is admitted even by his hostile critics—cannot be accused of leaning to that weakness. Psychologically, subconscious qualities come into play in a state of drunkenness and the habits formed, good or bad, appear on the surface and cannot be concealed. But we have ample testimony about Mahmūd's character and habits, and in the presence of such strong evidence in his favour he cannot be said to have acted in the manner described in the story. The most funny thing in the story is that its author, as also those who have followed

* *Vide infra*, 166 ff.

him, speak highly of Mahmūd's piety and at the same time accuse him of drunkenness and showing an inclination towards sodomy. How piety and drunkenness could go hand in hand in the case of Mahmūd is not explained. This in itself is enough to discredit the story and prove its falsity. The third is an amplification of this contradiction of facts. It is a mixture of opposites—piety and impiety, drunkenness and sobriety.* How a man whose piety is admitted on all hands, even by the author of the story, could become impious at one and the same time, how in a state of drunkenness he could remain pious and how in his passion for piety he would like to punish the object of his 'true love' instead of reproaching and reforming himself are points which contradict each other and conclusively prove that the story is nothing but a fabrication and that its author was nothing but a fool. For, in the first place, it is impossible to remain pious when drunk and secondly it was not just or equitable on the part of Mahmūd, whose sense of justice is also universally admired, to order the cutting of Ayāz's locks which had done no wrong. If there was anything wrong, should the story be true, it was Mahmūd and not Ayāz who was responsible for it. In that case, Mahmūd should have given up drinking, "the

* How the author of the story, who was a Muslim, and his Muslim imitators, including 'Allāma Shiblī, were able to reconcile these opposites is not clear to me and I am at a loss to understand their conception of "piety" and "true love". (See *CM*, 62).

mother of all evils", if at all he had been a drunkard, as depicted in the story, or he should have reproached and reformed himself. That would have been the proper course under those circumstances. That Mahmūd liked and even loved Ayāz is true enough, but the story as told in the *Chahār Maqāla* and reproduced in the *Shir-ul-'Ajam* and other books, is false on the face of it. Dr. M. Nāzım is right in saying that "the proverbial attachment of the Sultān to his handsome Turkoman slave Abū'n-Najm Ayār bin Uymaq was due to the extraordinary devotion of Ayāz rather than to his good looks."* It appears that the existence of this attachment captured the fancy of poets and story-tellers who developed it into a love-romance and depicted it in lurid colours.

Another story that lacks historical foundation is that relating to the Idol of
 The Idol of Somnāth Somnāth. Briefly stated, it is to
 Somnāth the effect that after the conquest of
 Somnāth Mahmūd entered the temple and ordered the idol to be demolished; that in spite of the strong protestations and remonstrances of the Brahmans, who threw themselves at the feet of the invader and rolled before him, imploring to spare the idol and take its weight in gold, the Sultān lifted up his mace and dealt it a heavy blow, saying that he would rather like to be called an idol-breaker than an idol-seller,

* V G, 153

and that the moment the blow escaped the hollow figure burst asunder and poured forth a far larger treasure at the feet of the 'iconoclast' than that offered to him for sparing it. This story is fictitious for the following reasons: (1) It lacks all contemporary confirmation. If it had been true and correct, it would have been utilized as a theme for *qasidas* by such poets as Farrukhī. (2) The unexpected find of gems and jewels is not mentioned in any of the contemporary works, nor does it find place in the letter of victory sent by the Sultān to the Khalīfa of Baghdād and quoted by the earlier authorities. (3) There ought to have been no question of offering a ransom for sparing the idol for the simple reason that everything belonged to Mahmūd by right of conquest and lay at his mercy. (4) The *lingams* or phallī everywhere in India are invariably made of solid stone and are not hollow, and there is no reason why the *lingam* at Somnāth be made an exception to the rule. (5) As the form and shape of the *lingam* of Somnāth are not described by any writer, it is reasonable to believe that it was a shapeless solid stone and not hollow. (6) The contemporary scholar, Alberūnī, who had travelled all over India and recorded his observations on Hindū life and thought, has given elaborate rules regarding the construction of such idols (*lingams*).^{*} He has nowhere mentioned that the *lingams* were hollow. On the other hand, the impression that we gather from

^{*} See Sachau, II, 193-4.

his account is that they were solid. In view of all these facts it is not safe to believe the story that Mahmūd was requested to spare the idol of Somnāth and take its weight in gold and that he refused to do so on the ground that he preferred the title of idol-breaker to that of idol-seller. It must therefore be dismissed as a later concoction. That the idol was broken is true enough.

This story is as follows. Mahmūd was so much fascinated by the climate of Kāthiāwār that he wished to fix his capital there, but was dissuaded by his officers from doing so and advised to leave a deputy there. There were two candidates for the post of governor—one an ascetic and the other a Rājā—either called Dābīshlīm. The choice of the Sultān fell on the ascetic and he was appointed governor of the place. Lest Rājā Dābīshlīm should menace the ascetic Dābīshlīm after the departure of Mahmūd, he requested the Sultān to remove him from his way. At that time the Sultān said that he had already spent a period of three years in carrying on 'a holy war' in India and that he would have to stay there for another six months to settle that affair. Rājā Dābīshlīm was attacked, defeated and brought a prisoner before the new governor, but he feared to keep him in his own custody and therefore requested the Sultān to take him with himself. Mahmūd acceded to his request and took the captive to Ghaznī. Subsequently, the governor sent his men to fetch over his rival to his capital.

When the captive was due the governor went a part of the way to receive him in accordance with the custom of the country. As the captive was a little late in arriving, he went to sleep under the shade of a tree, putting a red handkerchief on his face. While he was fast asleep, a bird of prey stooped down and, mistaking the red handkerchief for a piece of flesh, pounced upon his face and tore away his eyes along with the handkerchief. When the captive arrived, the people acclaimed him as their ruler, for their ruler (the ascetic) had been rendered unfit to rule. The new ruler, *s. e.*, Rāja Dābīshlīm, ascended the throne and confined his rival, the ascetic, in the cell which the latter had prepared for him.*

This is a myth on the face of it. In the first place, it lacks all contemporary confirmation. There is nothing in the contemporary literature to corroborate any of the statements made above. It first appears in the *Wasāya-i-Nizām-ul-Mulk* which is a work of the 9th century, written about four centuries after the death of Mahmūd. Secondly, there is nothing on record to show that Mahmūd ever fought against a Rāja, named Dābīshlīm, whom he carried to Ghaznī as a prisoner, *etc.*† Thirdly, we know for certain that

* T. F., 1, 34-35; *Ransat-us-Safa*, 741-42;

† In vain have some modern scholars devoted their time and energy to the identification of the mythical Dābīshlīm with some Hindū princes of India. Professor Hodivala has devoted considerable space to the subject, but has not been able to resist the conclusion that the story is a myth,

he left no governor at Somnāth.^{*} On the other hand, the Hīndū governor of the place, who had fled at the approach of Mahmūd, returned soon after his departure † Fourthly, Mahmūd's stay at Somnāth did not exceed a few days. Allāma Ibn-ul-Asīr informs us that Mahmūd went back to Ghaznīn within four months after the capture of Somnāth ‡ During the years preceding and following the year of the Somnāth expedition Mahmūd was occupied elsewhere.§

pure and simple In his own words "The story is undoubtedly unhistorical and the details imaginary The chronology also is impossible, as Mahmūd is known to have returned to Ghaznīn in 417 H The name of Dābīshlīm is only a literary fiction or reminiscence from the *Kalīla-wa Dimna* and the denouement is merely an edifying tale of poetic justice, an epilogue to inculcate and point a moral of the 'Biter bit' type" (S I-VI H, 239)

See *supra*, pp 75 ff, and M. G, 118, f n 8

† Z A, 86

‡ K T, IV, 242-43

§ See *supra*, pp 35-36, 46-48

CHAPTER VII

SULTAN MAHMUD THE GREAT—VI

CLOSING DAYS, CHARACTER AND ESTIMATE

Now that we have dealt with the wars and conquests of Sultān Mahmūd, the Introductory cultural activities of his reign and the stories delineating certain traits of his character, it has become easy for us to describe his character, to estimate the value of his work and to assign him his proper place in history. But before this is done, it is necessary to give a brief account of his closing days because they too have a bearing on the subject under discussion.

During the expedition against the Jāts (1027 A. C) Mahmūd is said to have contracted malaria, which became chronic and affected his lungs. He continued suffering from consumption for over two years. During his illness also he did not allow himself the rest that was so essential for his health. On the other hand, he concealed his ill-health from the public and exposed himself to the hardships of arduous journeys and distant expeditions. He performed his daily duties as before and did not shrink from proceeding against the Saljūqs and the refractory governors in person even when he was suffering from that malady. The result was that his health,

rapidly failing, broke down, so much so that he sank all of a sudden and passed away on the 30th of April, 1030 A. C.* He was buried in the Fīrozi Garden which was his most favourite pleasure-resort † During his prolonged illness he showed remarkable powers of endurance and self-control. His end was indeed in harmony with his eventful career—a monument of patience and perseverance, self-reliance and contempt of danger. He died quite as boldly as he had lived—defying death.‡

On his death-bed the Sultān is said to have ordered his treasures to be displayed before him and to have 'wept bitterly' at their sight. His grief on that occasion is differently interpreted by different writers: One theory is that he felt pangs of remorse at the prospect of leaving behind his treasures of wealth without having spent anything in the way of God.§ The sponsors of this theory charge him with "a sordid love of mammon" and condemn

* According to lunar reckoning Mahmūd had an age of sixty-one years

† T M, 12

‡ Z A, 92; and K T, 1, 281

§ The first propounder of this view seems to have been Khwāndmīr. He is followed, among others, by Sir W. Haig who says. "The avarice most conspicuously displayed in his review of his riches before his death and in his undignified lamentations over the prospect of leaving them . . ." (C. H. I, III, 27)

him as a typical instance of avarice and greed. The other theory is just the reverse. According to it, Mahmūd realized the ultimate helplessness of man and the mutability of human greatness*. In the presence of irrefutable evidence, pointing to his generosity, which was so widely and so liberally enjoyed, it is impossible to subscribe to the former theory. The latter theory is quite tenable because its interpretation of Mahmūd's lamentations is completely consistent with the facts of his life. Apart from all this, the Sultān himself is said to have so explained his grief in some verses that have come down to us.† Moreover, in his last moments he must have received a rude

* Dr M Nāzīm has beautifully expounded this theory in these words " , and possibly the terrible drama of a lifetime—the burning towns, the ruined castles, the fields of battle seething with blood, the yells of frightened fugitives, and the groans of dying wretches, mingled with the clatter of victorious arms,—all rose in a ghastly vision before his troubled soul. A pang of remorse shot through his heart, tears trickled down his cheeks" (M G, 125). Another theory is—that Mahmūd's lamentations were due to his illness. Professor M Habib says that consumptive diseases have such effects (S M. G, 56, f n).

† The verses (T H., 1, 295) are as follows —

ہزار قلعہ کشادم بیک اشارت دست
بسے مصاف شکستم بیک اشارت پائے
چو مرگ تاحس آورد بیچ سوز لداشت
بقائے جدا است و ملک ملک خداے

The evidence of these verses, read with the evidence cited above, is conclusive on the point under discussion

shock at the presentiment that the empire that had entailed so much suffering and bloodshed was tottering to its fall before his own eyes. "On the distant horizon", says Dr. M. Nāzım, "his keen eye could discern a dark cloud, the harbinger of a threatening storm for the Seljuqs, whom in a moment of weakness he had permitted to settle in Khurāsān, were gathering force with ominous rapidity. The stupendous achievement of a life of vigorous warfare appeared to be crumbling away as the great Sultān lay on his death-bed."

There is no doubt that Mahmūd had succeeded in creating a vast and wonderful empire out of chaos within a period of thirty years—an achievement which reflects great credit on his military genius—, but it is open to doubt if he had taken necessary steps to consolidate what he had conquered and to cement the foundations of his empire. His work did not endure. The mighty fabric fell down soon after his death. It appears that it had some inherent weaknesses and that it carried the germs of disintegration with it. In the first place, consolidation in the scheme of the Sultān did not keep pace with conquest. Most of his time was occupied by wars and conquests. Consequently, he had little leisure to devote to administrative affairs. The story of the widow who complained of lawlessness in the distant parts of the Ghaznawid Empire and Mahmūd's

Beginning
of the end.

prompt action does reflect credit on the Sultān's sense of duty towards his subjects, but it does not conceal the fact that the administrative control was rather slack.* Secondly, the Empire had grown unwieldy and in the absence of such means of communication and transportation as we have in our own times it was not easy to inspire awe and fear among the refractory governors of the outlying provinces of the far-flung empire, who never missed an opportunity or failed to avail themselves of the weakness of the Central Government. Thirdly, when the Sultān was out on his expeditions the work of administration was carried on by his ministers. There is no doubt that his ministers were men of great ability and character, but it cannot be denied that they were wanting in the breadth of vision and betrayed a certain amount of selfishness. They devised no means and methods for controlling the distant parts of the Empire and establishing the Imperial authority there. On the other hand, they seem to have done more to strengthen the Vizārat Department than to cement the foundations of the great Empire.† Fourthly, the government of the newly conquered provinces was not based on the acquiescent good-will of

* On receipt of her complaint when the Sultān urged the impossibility of maintaining law and order in such remote parts of his Empire as Irāq, the widow boldly retorted: "Why do you conquer places which you cannot properly govern? You shall have to account for this on the Day of Judgment." (S N, 58)

† See S. A. M. A, 161. ff.

the people living there. Kingdoms were overthrown and princes were taken prisoners, but no attempt was made to pacify the people. Temporarily subdued, the supporters and sympathizers of the fallen stars were ever ready to cast in their lot with the enemies of the Sultān with a view to throw off his yoke. Fifthly, the wealth that had poured in from all quarters fostered luxury among the Ghaznawids and demoralized them. The rise, at first, of the Saljūqs and then of the Ghūrids, who were heads and shoulders above the degenerated Ghaznawids in physical strength and stamina, sounded the death-knell of the Ghaznawid Empire, which could not withstand or survive the repeated rebuffs inflicted on it by its enemies. Finally, the successors of Sultān Mahmūd were mere mediocres, who could not control the affairs of such a vast and wonderful Empire. Some of them were too weak to suppress disorders even in their capital. The dismemberment of the Empire began as soon as the master-mind was no more. The disruptive elements kept under control by Mahmūd escaped soon after his death and plunged the administrative affairs into chaos.*

The character and work of Sultān Mahmūd, whose name has become the centre of a cycle of heroic legends, have occasioned a most heated controversy. By some he is regarded as a fierce, ferocious and fanatical Muslim who knew no pity

* See *infra*, Chapters VIII and IX

and who tried to plant Islām in India at the point of the sword. Others have depicted him in most lurid colours and tried to show that he was a brigand chief, with an insatiable thirst for power, pelf and prestige, 'so laboriously won, so precariously held, so inevitably lost'. Dazzled by his extraordinary genius—too dazzled to know his limitations—, his ill-informed admirers have raised him above criticism and declared him not only the greatest sovereign the world has ever produced but also a saint, endowed with miraculous powers. Whereas fanatics of to-day have extolled him as a true model of kingship whose foot-steps every Muslim king should aspire to follow, moralists of a different type have condemned him as an embodiment of avarice, greed and selfishness. Such are the conflicting and contradictory views about his character and work, carried to their farthest extremes by their exponents. The truth lies between the two extremes, for Mahmūd was neither the one nor the other—neither a saint nor a savage. As a man and a mortal, he had his own virtues and weaknesses; and there is no point in exaggerating the one or the other side of his character and thus overdrawing the picture.

A man of medium stature, with muscular and well-proportioned limbs, fine
 His personal appearance complexion, handsome face, small eyes and a fine round chin, covered with a sparse beard, Mahmūd enjoyed a sound robust health which never failed him during his thirty years' struggle when he had to bear the

hardships and privations of arduous journeys and prolonged sieges,[†] except at the end when he fell ill and spoiled it by strenuous work.

Mahmūd was endowed with remarkable qualities of head and heart. Kind His virtues and sympathetic by nature, he was a man of strong family affections. He was a dutiful son and a loving brother. As a lieutenant of his father, he proved himself a great source of strength to him in his military expeditions. He always tried to act upon his advice. The reasons why he acted against his will in the matter of succession to the throne have been set forth at their proper place and there is no need to recapitulate them here.[†] Suffice it to

[†] This testimony of Allama Ibn-ul-Asīr (*K T*, 18, 284) and Sibṭ Ibn-ul-Jawzī (quoted by Dr M Nāẓim in *M' G*, 151, f n 1) is enough to belie the story that Maḥmūd had very ugly looks, which was a constant source of mortification to him (*T G in E & D*, 11, 245, *H I*, 246) Referring to the personal features of Maḥmūd, Hamdullah Mastaufi says *نصورت کمره القا بود* : *e* had an ugly appearance (*T G*, 395) The *Siyāsāt-Nāmah* of Nizām-ul-Mulk is, as far as I know, the earliest source of the insinuation It is a work of the 5th century H (485 A H = 1092-93 A C) All that it says about Maḥmūd's personal looks is — *رو به نیکو نبود* : *e* did not possess a handsome face (*S N*, 44) Ferishta says *سلطان ار حسن و جمال طاہری عاری بود* : *e* The Sultān was devoid of outward (or physical) beauty and grace. (*T. F*, 1, 22)

[†] See *supra* pp 26-29.

say that Subuktigīn had made a mistake in nominating Ismā'īl as his successor. Having explored all avenues of a peaceful settlement of claims, he took up the gauntlet thrown down by his brother as a last resort, and then, inflicting a defeat on his rival and taking him prisoner, he treated him with characteristic kindness. It was only when Ismā'īl abused the indulgence shown to him by his brother by plotting against his life in collusion with Nushtigīn Kaj that he was transferred to the custody of the governor of Jūzjānān, where he ended his life in peace.* That was the greatest punishment inflicted by Mahmūd on his brother for the offence of treason. He treated his other brothers with great love, took them into confidence and entrusted them with responsible posts and powers†. His treatment of his uncle, Bughrājūq, was marked by the same feelings of affection. He was very keen and careful about the education of his sons. He maintained a very strict supervision over their

* *Ibid*, 28-29.

† His brother, Abul Muzaffar Nasr, who was in charge of the province of Nishāpur, was a most capable and public-spirited officer. Speaking of him, 'Utbī says that 'so noble, pure, kind, and liberal was his disposition that a harsh word was never heard from him during his whole life, and he offered no wrong or violence to anyone'. This is a well-deserved tribute from a competent historian having personal knowledge about the prince praised (K Y, Reynold's translation, pp 485-86). Gardizī informs us that he was entrusted with the highest military office in the empire, i. e., the command of the troops of Khurāsān, and the governorship of Sīstān (Z A, 79).

private life and tried to regulate their social activities in accordance with the Islāmic code of morality. He trained them in the military exercises of the day; and in order to enable them to pick up the requisite administrative experience, he placed them in charge of provincial governments and appointed capable ministers to assist them in their work. He was very kind and considerate to his officers. He respected their legitimate aspirations and always tried to promote their interests. That was why he received glowing tributes from them even after his death. He threw careers open to talents and recognized ability, education and experience as the principal qualifications for the State service. Dr. M. Nāzīm assures us that there is nothing on record to indicate that he ever chose his ministers for considerations other than those stated above.* He was very generous and forgiving and it was only in rare cases that he inflicted capital punishment. He seldom punished the rebels with anything worse than simple imprisonment. He had an innate love of justice and was profoundly interested in its even-handed distribution. His sense of justice is beautifully illustrated by the treatment meted out by him to his nephew for contracting illicit connections with the wife of a poor man† and

* M G, 151

† Once a poor man presented a complaint to the Sultān, alleging that his nephew, having struck intimacy with his wife, had entered his house by force, disgraced him and driven him out by dealing blows; and that the offender had

the punishment inflicted by him on an important military officer named 'Alī Nushtigīn for transgressing the Muslim law. * His own son, Mas'ūd, could escape to appear before a Qāzī only by an immediate settlement of the claim against him.† His respect for genuine piety is borne out by the visit he paid to the celebrated saint, Abul Hasan Kharqānī, after undertaking an arduous journey‡ and the reception he used to accord to another saint, named Abū Saīd 'Abdul Malīk bin Abū 'Usmān Muhammad bin Ibrāhīm al-Khargūshī, whenever he visited the Imperial Court.§ He was deeply interested in the welfare of his subjects. Story-tellers and other writers have credited him with a strong sense of duty to his people and a very high conception of kingship.

renewed the outrage more than once. The Sultān was exasperated at this piece of information and was beside himself with rage, but he asked the complainant to keep quiet and to come again and inform him as soon as the offender paid another visit. On the third day the complainant appeared again and informed the Sultān of the wrong to which he was being constantly subjected. Putting on a loose cloak and taking his sword with him, Mahmūd followed the complainant to his house and found the guilty couple in *flagrante de licito*. He first extinguished the lamp and then dealt such a blow to the adulterer with his sword that his head fell off. (T F, 1, 36)

* S N., 41

† Ibid., 208

‡ T F, 1, 37-38, and *Tas̄karat-ul-Auliyā*, Pt II, 209

§ K T., ix, 247.

It is narrated that on receiving a complaint from a widow about a dacoity in the vicinity of Irāq, in which her son was killed, he took effective measures for the maintenance of law and order even in the remotest parts of his far-flung empire.⁴

From being an orthodox follower of the Hanafite school of law, Mahmūd changed over to the Karramite creed, which attributed "substantiality" to God, and ultimately subscribed to the Shāfi'ite school of law † Despite these changes—indicating perhaps a spirit of independent inquiry in religious matters—, he had a strong faith in God and was so firm in faith that even amidst a clash of arms he would kneel down to offer his homage to the Almighty and pray for the success of his arms. Punctilious in the performance of his religious duties, he paid *Zakāt* and distributed alms among the poor and was highly extolled for his piety.‡ He is said to have been

⁴ T H, 1, 296, and S N, 58

† T Y., 324-33, *Mughis-ul-Khalq* quoted in M. G, 159, and S. N, 44.

‡ T M, 330, K T, 1x, 262, and M G, 159. Ferishta, a later historian, thus describes the character of Sultān Mahmūd the Great -

”سلطان محمود عز نوى پادشاھ درود با صواب سعادت دينى و دينوى فائز گردیده .. سرت پسندیده بکائى رسا و دکرار هم پادشاھان در گشت“ (تاریخ فرشته - جلد اول - صفحات ۲۲-۲۳)

In the presence of such strong and sufficient

keenly desirous of performing a pilgrimage to Mecca, but his political pre-occupations left him no time to do so *. Far from fanatic, as he is too often described, he was not even a bigot, and if he was, he was one without intolerance. He maintained a large body of Hindūs in his service and we know for certain that conversion was not a condition of their employment. He waged wars with the infidels not because it was meritorious from religious point of view—they had not the least semblance of *Jihad* (defensive war) in them—, but because it was a part of his military programme, a great source of gain and, withal, the greatest source of glory in his times †

He was the *beau ideal* of a soldier. He always fought in the front rank and
As a soldier & a general his was always the inspiring soul
in the battle-field He is said to

evidence, pointing to his piety, it is difficult to believe that he was addicted to drinking, as he is supposed to have been (*M. G.*, 153) He might have been addicted to drinking in his youth and then given it up later on and become pious But for this there is nothing to reconcile the two contradictory traits of his character — تقویٰ or piety and شراب حوری or drunkenness

* *M. G.*, 160

† See *supra*, pp 84 ff, and *H I*, 292 There is but one solitary instance when Mahmūd is said to have offered the alternatives of "Islām, tribute or the sword" to a Hindū Rāja of Hindūstān—Ganda, who stoutly rejected the first two proposals and cheerfully accepted the challenge to fight—, but this does not mean that he compelled the Rāja to embrace Islām, for the Rāja had the option of retaining his religion on payment of tribute after submission.

have received as many as 72 cuts and wounds.¹ His genius as a general cannot be described justly except in terms of superlatives that defy the dictionary. His military exploits eclipsed those of Alexander the Great and stand unsurpassed in the annals of the world. At his accession he was the ruler of Ghaznīn, Bust and Balkh, which he held as a vassal of the Sāmānid King. Immediately after his accession he declared his independence and, like other independent rulers, established direct relations with the Khalīfa of Baghdād. Next he launched upon a career of conquest which was crowned with the creation of a vast and wonderful empire. He conquered Sīstān, Ghūr, Gharshistān, Khwārizm, Kāfiristān, Raiy, Jibāl, and Isfahān, and established his suzerainty over the rulers of Qusdār, Mēkrān, Tabārīstān, Jurjān, Khultān, Saghāniyān and Qubādiān in the west. In the east he overran a large part of India, overthrew the Hindūshāhiya Dynasty which ruled over the region between Lamghān and the river Biyās, conquered Multān and Bhātiya and exacted allegiance from the rulers of the states of southern Kashmīr, Kanauj, Kālnjar, Gwālhor, Narāyanpur and many other Rājas of secondary importance. Within a period of three decades he set up an empire which extended from Irāq and the Caspian Sea to the Ganges and from the Aral Sea and Transoxiana to the Indian Ocean, Sīnd and the desert of Rājputāna, covering an area of about 2,800,000

¹ *Majmā-ul-Ansāb* quoted in *M. G.*, 154.

square miles *

So much of Mahmūd's time was occupied by conquests that he had little leisure to devote to administrative affairs. But the fact that he was able to preserve good order throughout the length and breadth of his far-flung empire bears eloquent testimony to his administrative talents. He was richly endowed with a creative and constructive genius, but he did not introduce any new legislation or innovations like other great kings This was perhaps because he had no time to do that. Persian institutions and the laws of the *Shariyat* served his purpose well, and without wasting his time in formulating new laws and introducing new institutions, he contented himself with whatever ready-made he had. For the effective and efficient administration of his kingdom he created an official machinery and put it in charge of a responsible officer who was officially known as Wazir † The Wazir was the most important man in the kingdom, next only to the monarch. The first to occupy this position under Mahmūd was 'Abdul Abbās Fazl bin Ahmad, a man of wide and varied experience and an expert in the art of government ‡ Abbās remained in office for a

*M G., 169

† For details on the subject, see last chapter Also see S A M A, 161 ff, and M G, 135-37

‡ He had gained enough administrative experience during his service under Subuktigin and the Sāmānids

period of about ten years and acquitted himself very admirably. But the jealousies of the nobles aroused by his rise, coupled with his refusal to surrender a favourite slave of his to the Sultān and some alleged misappropriation of State revenue, brought about his fall. While Mahmūd was out on an Indian expedition, he was treated so tyrannically that he succumbed to the tortures to which he was subjected.* The next man who became *Wazīr* was *Shams-ul-Kufāt*† Abul Qāsim Ahmād bin Hasan al-Maimandī, a man of great culture and refinement, an able administrator and, above all, a school-fellow and foster brother of the Sultān. He enjoyed the confidence of the king for not less than eighteen years and during this long period he gave ample proof of his genius for government, devotion to duty, discipline and loyalty, and established his reputation so strongly that his name passed on from generation to generation as one of the wisest and most upright ministers in the Muslim world. Unfortunately, however, he too, like the first *Wazīr*, incurred the enmity of the nobles by disregarding them, and the result was that he also met the same fate—was dismissed and sent a prisoner to one

(S A M A, 164, and M G, 135).

* T Y, 265-73, *Asār-ul-Wuzarā*, *Dastūr-ul-Wuzarā*, S A M A, 164-65, and M G, 135

† 'Shams-ul-Kufāt' was the title of this *Wazīr* (Vide T Y, 346, L H P, II, 105, S N, Pt I, Ch VII, 51 and Pt II, Ch XI, 53) In E & D, Vol II, p 486, it is written as *Shams-ul-Kah*, which is nonsense

of the forts of India * Apparently, it was the second time that the opposition of the nobles compelled Mahmūd to throw out his minister. Since the safety and stability of the government depended very largely on the good-will and co-operation of the nobility, both the monarch and his minister had to respect their feelings and to carry out their wishes. In order, therefore, to eliminate the element of opposition to the *Wazīr* Mahmūd asked them to select four men and to submit their names to him, so that he might choose one of them as his *Wazīr*. This was done, and the Sultān considered the qualifications of each individual candidate and said that the first, Abul Qāsim, was indispensable in the military department, that the second, Abul Hasan lacked polished manners, that the third, Ahmad, was most useful in the refractory province of Khwārizm, and that the fourth, Hasanak,† was the fittest man, both by ability and descent, but was unfortunately too young to occupy that exalted office. The nobles noted that the Sultān

* *Jawāmi-ul-Hikāyat*, I, xii, 9, *T M*, 211, *T Y*, 272-73, *S A M A*, 165-66, *S N*, 206, and *Asār-ul-Wuzarā*

† His real name as given by Gardīzī is Hasan bin Muhammad-al-Mikālī (*Z A*, 96). According to Ferishta, it was Ahmad Hasan bin Mikāl (*T F*, i, 38). 'Utbī calls him Abū 'Alī Hasan bin Muhammad bin Abbās (*T Y*, 329) and on his authority Khwāndmīr speaks of him as Abū 'Alī Husain (recte Hasan) bin Muhammad (*Dastūr-ul-Wuzarā* in *E & D*, iv, 151). Hasanak is the diminutive or familiar form of Hasan (*S, I M H*, 156).

was most favourably inclined towards the youngest candidate and, knowing that all the four candidates would be rejected if they did not declare for him, they unanimously voted for Hasanak who accepted the office and occupied it till the death of the Sultān.* The election of a panel by the officials and the selection of one *Wazir* from it by the Sultān and giving reasons, in brief, for the appointment of one and the rejection of others in a constitution in which there was no organized public opinion made the king constitutional at least in this respect, for the method of selection was decidedly better than arbitrary appointment.† While assuming the command of his army,—for most of his life he spent in camp,—he left the prosaic task of administration to his talented ministers who displayed considerable tact and ability in the management of State affairs. His civil officers had the efficiency that was required of them. The result was that the administration was based on the principles of justice and equity, and law and order were maintained so vigorously that “the lion and the fox drank side by side from the same stream.” Trade and commerce were protected, “so that caravans could freely pass between Khurāsān and Lāhore.” Provincial governors were warned to be strictly honest in their dealings. They were kept under strict control and were not

* *T M*, 208-11, 453-54, *T Y.*, 329-33, *K T.*, ix, 239, and *S A M A*, 166-67.

† *S A M A*, 166-67

allowed to oppress the people in any way. The activities of the shopkeepers were regularly watched, and the Sultān himself appointed officers to supervise the weights and measures used by the merchants * Yet with all their extraordinary genius, they were wanting in the breadth of vision which, if they had, would have enabled them to consolidate with their far-sighted statesmanship what their king had conquered by his superior military genius We cannot deny that they were clever and thorough in their work, but the fact cannot escape recognition that, like common-place administrative experts, they were devoid of idealism and that an empire without ideals cannot last long.†

Mahmūd's claims to cultural greatness are equally well-founded. He was a liberal patron of art and literature and under him Ghaznī rose to the rank of a stately city, containing such masterpieces of art as "the Celestial Bride" and such educational institutions as the Grand University His patronage of poetry has rightly passed into a proverb

Mahmūd was not without some weaknesses.‡

Mahmūd's weaknesses. He was self-willed and stubborn He was fierce when his will was thwarted and had no stomach for defeat in

* T. M, 664; T. Y, 332; and S N., 41

† S M G, 69-70.

‡ "There was in him", says Allāma Ibn-ul-Asīr, "nothing which could be blamed save that he would seek

arguments, though he had the grace to acknowledge his mistakes in cooler moments after momentary fits of indignation. Tolerant towards the *Zimmīs* (non-Muslims) to a fairly high degree, his attitude towards the non-Sunnī Muslims was positively hostile. He could not tolerate the slightest departure from belief in the orthodox Sunnī sect. He appointed *Muhtasibs* (censors) to supervise the religious life of his subjects and to punish them for heresy and moral delinquency. The Carmathians, Bātinīs and other non-Sunnīs were captured, imprisoned and impaled; and their literature was destroyed without the least compassion. In the words of Dr. M. Nāzım "An invaluable store of learning which the liberal policy and scholarly zeal of the Buwaihids had accumulated in the course of years was thus consumed in an instant to satisfy the enthusiasm of the puritan warrior"¹ Though honest and

to obtain money in every way" The Allāma has laid his finger on a weak spot in Mahmūd's character. On receipt of money from a wealthy man, accused of Carmathian heresy, he issued a certificate testifying to the soundness of his religious beliefs. But this does not imply that he was greedy. The need and not the greed for money, as already pointed out, led him sometimes to resort to objectionable means for acquiring it.

¹ This intolerance does not seem to have been genuine. It was most probably occasioned by the hostile attitude of the Sunnī Khalīfa of Baghdād who had declared a war against the Fātimid Khalīfa of Cairo who championed the cause of the family of the Prophet Muhammad. The political motives which influenced his attitude towards the non-Sunnīs takes most of the fanatic out of Mahmūd,

upright in daily life, he did not shrink from having recourse to underhand means when they served his purpose well in political and administrative matters. As the founder of a dynasty, he was a failure and in the matter of deciding the question of succession to the throne after his death he cannot escape the blame of short-sightedness. In 1017 A C he nominated Mas'ūd as his successor,* but in 1018 A. C. he left Muhammad as his deputy at Ghaznīn and asked the Khalīfa of Bagh-dād to give preference to his name over that of his brother, Mas'ūd, in official correspondence † This engendered hostilities between the two brothers and led to the formation of two parties, which made confusion worse confounded ‡ Later he divided the almost unwieldy empire between Mas'ūd and Muhammad, but here again he betrayed the same partiality § This added fuel to the fire and set it ablaze. Shortly before his death, he disinherited Mas'ūd and nominated Muhammad as the sole monarch of his dominions after his death. This was a blunder of the first magnitude and the Sultān cannot be exonerated

but it also reveals a weakness of character—violation of the most elementary principles of morality for ulterior motives

* *T M*, 256

† *Ibid*, 258

‡ The division of the empire was well thought out, for it had become extremely difficult to control the outlying provinces from Ghaznīn, but the division was far from judicious, for it favoured one and handicapped the other

§ *T M*, 27-28

of the charge of unduly favouring his younger son, especially when he knew too well that the elder was the abler of the two brothers.

From the preceding analysis of Mahmūd's character it is evident that his virtues far-outweighed his weaknesses and his constructive work fully overshadows all that he destroyed. Everything considered, he was by far the greatest king of his age and one of the greatest personalities of the world. Referring to the two extreme view-points about his character and work—the Hindūs representing him as a veritable Hun and the Muslims adoring him as a hero after their own hearts, *i e.*, a *Walī-allah*†—Professor Ishwari Prasad thus expresses his opinion with touching brevity :—

“The impartial observer must, however, record a different verdict. To him the Sultān was a born leader of men, a just and upright ruler, an intrepid and gifted soldier, a dispenser of justice, a patron of letters, and deserves to be ranked among the greatest personalities of the world”†

* T N, 91-93

† He is frequently spoken of by Muslims as a *Walī-allah* (saint) endowed with miraculous powers

‡ A *Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, by Dr. Ishwari Prasad, 55, and *M I*, 115.

CHAPTER VIII

SULTAN MAS'UD I

Sultān Mahmūd left three sons, viz. Mas'ūd, Muhammad and Nasr, of whom the first-named was the eldest and the last-named the youngest and a minor.* As early as 406 A. H. (=1015-16 A. C.) Mahmūd had nominated Mas'ūd as his successor and made his nobles swear allegiance to him † Later, he was annoyed with the 'riotous conduct' of the heir-apparent and made up his mind to bequeath his kingdom to his second son, Muhammad, who had made his way into the favours of his father during the expulsion of his brother. As a shrewd and experienced politician, Mahmūd knew too well that Mas'ūd was the abler of the two rival claimants and more qualified to rule in those troubled times. He therefore contemplated a division of the Empire but the idea was dropped probably because it aggravated the rivalry between the brothers and led to the formation of two parties and the creation of further troubles. Fortified with the permission of the Khalīfa to nominate his successor and following the precedent of the Ommayyade Khalīfas, notably Mu'āwīya, he declared Muhammad as his suc-

* T. M., 256 Dr. Ishwari Prasad (M. I., 119) says that Mas'ūd was Muhammad's "younger brother", but as he does not cite his authority, it is not safe to accept his statement as correct

† T. M., 256.

cessor and managed to instal him as such. He got his name inserted in the *Khutba* and made his nobles take oath of allegiance to him.⁴

The story of the struggle for succession between Mas'ūd and Muhammad is The war of a mere repetition of that of the succession. test for kingdom between Mahmūd and his brother, Ismā'il. At the time of Mahmūd's death Mas'ūd was away in charge of the government of Isfahān. In his absence Muhammad was elevated to the throne and the local grandees renewed their allegiance to him in accordance with the will of the late Sultān. When Mas'ūd received information about all this, he wrote a letter of condolence to his brother, Muhammad, expressing profound sorrow at the demise of his revered father and called upon him to acknowledge his superior claims by giving precedence to his name in the *Khutba* and the coins † Muhammad offered a flat refusal and

Vide T M, 27-28, 151, 258, *Jawāmi-ul-Hikāyāt*, I, XI, 46, Baizawī in *E & D*, II, 256; *T N*, 14, *T F*, I, 40, and Revert's *T N*, 85 f n 9, 91, 92 f n 4 and 93

† Mas'ūd refused to acquiesce in Muhammad's succession and asserted his own claims on the following grounds, *viz.*, (1) In his early years his father had declared him as his *Walī-Aḥad* or heir-apparent (2) The Khalīfa of Baghdād had granted him *Manshūr* and *Karāmat* (diploma of investiture and robe of honour respectively) and thus *vindicated his right* to succeed to his father, and this, according to him, was the strongest ground (3) He commanded the confidence of three prominent classes, *viz.*, nobles, commoners and religious people (4) He possessed

Mas'ūd had no alternative but to resort to the arbitrament of the sword. As soon as he arrived from Isfahān, the people took up his cause and the army also sided with him. Muhammad was taken prisoner, blinded and confined in the fort of Walwālīj,* while Mas'ūd ascended the throne and

the requisite qualifications for kingship, i. e. ability to rule and the tact to command respect of his officers

It may be noted here that the idea of having his claims to succession recognized by the Khalīfa of Baghlād had occurred to him quite early and he had sent an envoy to Al-Qādir Billah, the Khalīfa of Baghlād, with rich presents, and requested him to recognize his title. In addition to the presents sent, Mas'ūd had also promised to send a sum of 200,000 *dīnārs* and 10,000 pieces of cloth every year to the Khalīfa if his request was acceded to. In return for all this, his request was granted and the Khalīfa was pleased to send him a formal diploma of investiture, conferring upon him the titles and territories of his father, with the additional title of *Zāhur-ul-Khlāfat-ullah Amir-ul-Momīnīn*. Mas'ūd regarded this as a great victory and fully exploited it in his struggle for succession (*Vide* *T. M.*, 16-17, 49, 50 ff., 86, 101, 127, 533, *T. N.*, 1, 312, and *T. F.*, 1, 40)

* This word has a number of variants. Gardīzī calls it Walaj. (*Z. A.*, 95). He is followed by Nizām-ud-Dīn Ahmad (*T. A.*, 11) and Ferishta (*T. F.*, 1, 40). Ferishta further adds that in those days Walaj was also called Khalaj by the people of Qandhār (*Ibid*). Baihaqī calls it Walwālīj (*T. M.*, 693, 695, 696). He locates it on the road running between Kābul and Balkh. (*Ibid*, 350). Minhāj-us-Sirāj (*T. N.*, 343, 349, 359) calls it Walakh (*recte* Walaj). It appears that a dot was left out by the scribe and thus ج was converted into خ. Elliot's translation has it as Balbaj (*recte* Walaj). He identifies it with Kelāt-i-Ghulzāi (*E. & D.*, iv, 192, foot-note), but his conjecture does not carry weight in the presence of

assumed the reins of kingship with great care and caution.

Immediately after his accession to the throne, Sultān Mas'ūd ordered the release of Khwāja Ahmad *bin* Hasan al-Maimandī. Maimandī, brought him out of prison and reinstated him in his previous post. It was only after an unusually great reluctance and extraordinary pressure brought to bear upon him by the Sultān that he accepted the ministerial portfolio, but not before his duties and obligations, powers and privileges were clearly defined. He submitted a written statement, containing terms and conditions of service and got it approved by the Sultān before accepting the office.¹ When he was formally brought

Professor Hodivala's postulation, identifying it with Wal-wālīj, the place where Sultān Mahmūd had a mint (*S I-M H*, 190). Some of the coins struck at the said mint are preserved in the British Museum (*C O C*, II, p 148, No 503). It was a town in Tukhārīstān (*L E C*, 428). According to Abul Fida, it was the capital of that place (*A A* III, 88, note).

It was customary in those days for the Grand *Wasīr* of the Ghaznavids to submit a written statement, technically called *Mawāzā'* (موازا'), containing the duties and obligations of the *Wasīr* and defining his powers and privileges in relation to and as against other *Wasīrs* and high officials and even as against the Sultān himself and to get it approved by the Sultān before swearing allegiance to the throne and writing down an oath of allegiance (*E & D*, II, 65-67). Similar statements were indited and signed by some other *Wasīrs* and the terms and conditions

to the Royal Court, the Sultān invested him with powers and privileges second only to his own. After that he was taken to the royal wardrobe, so that he might put on the official costume prescribed for the Grand *Wasir*. Dressing himself in a garment of scarlet cloth of Baghdād, which was profusely worked with gold-thread, donning an *Amāma* (turban) of the finest muslin cloth, fringed with beautiful borders and decorated with a chain, and putting on a girdle of 1,000 *misqāls*, studded with turquoises, he appeared before the Sultān and offered him a beautiful bunch of pearls, valuing at 10,000 *dirhams*. In return, the Sultān presented him with his own ring, beset with a turquoise and having his own name inscribed in it. The Khwāja gratefully accepted the proffered present and swore allegiance to the Sultān. When he went home, people went to greet him in great numbers and showered such valuable presents on him as articles of gold and silver, fine pieces of cloth, camels, horses and Turkish slaves. Having collected the presents and gifts, the Khwāja sent them to the Sultān. Impressed by his unselfishness, the Sultān ordered 'Abdūs, one of his personal attendants, to take 10,000

laid therein were formally approved by the Grand *Wasir*. The *Mawāza'* was thus a covenant or contract of service between the employer and employee, defining the duties and obligations, powers and privileges of the parties in relation to each other. The Khwāja submitted a similar statement to the Sultān before accepting the office of Grand *Wasir* and obtained his sanction (S I-M H, 152)

dīnārs, 50,000 *dirhams*, ten Turkish slaves, five horses from the royal stud and ten camels as presents from him. Once liberated and restored to his previous position,† the talented Khwāja

* The man who took the presents of the Sultān to the Khwāja was called 'Abdūs (عبدوس). The original is - پنج سبک خاص و ده استر عبدوس برد او داد - 'Abdūs took five special horses (reserved for the use of the Sultān) and ten camels to him. The translation in *E & D*, II, 72 is as follows "So he ordered five horses and ten 'Abdūs camels to be taken to him." There is and ought to be no *isāfat* after استر and 'Abdūs camels is a sheer nonsense. Professor Ishwari Prasad (*M I*, 163) has followed *E & D* without ascertaining the meaning of 'Abdūs camels and comparing the translation in *E & D* with the original and hence repeated the error. In the same passage (*E & D*, II, 72) 'Abdūs is referred to as camels. The original is - چون عبدوس با این کرامت بردگ دو ادر سدد خواهر برد حاست و عبدوس نار غشت e : "When 'Abdūs approached the Khwāja with these presents, the Khwāja rose up and 'Abdūs then returned." It is quite clear from the original that 'Abdūs was an important officer of the Sultān, who took presents to the Khwāja, because the latter rose up at his arrival as a mark of respect. Moreover, we have enough evidence to show that 'Abdūs was a favourite personal attendant of Sultān Mas'ūd. His full name was Abū S'ad bin 'Abdul Azīz (*Z A*, 98, and *T A*, 11). He is frequently referred to by Baihaqī, extracts from whose book are translated in *E & D*, II, 62, 90-92, 101. The translation of the above extract in *E & D* is as follows "When the camels brought the presents before the Khawajah, he rose up. The camels then returned." What a funny translation!

† He had served Sultān Mahmūd as his *Wasir* for a period of 18 years, but was condemned owing to the

devoted himself heart and soul to the task of reorganizing the *Wizarat* Department which had become notorious for delay during his absence. He screwed up the machinery of administration and tightened its control, so much so that every department of the State became active and efficient under his care and control.

While Khwāja Ahmad bin Hasan al-Maimandī was so kindly treated and honoured by the Sultān, his predecessor in office, *viz.*, Hasanak, was charged with treason on the ground that he had poisoned Mahmūd's mind against Mas'ūd * How far that charge was correct, we are not in a position to say; but taking it as it is, it appears to have been too vague to carry conviction with those who liked and loved Hasanak. Nor could the Sultān convince his high officials of the necessity or desirability of doing away with the ex-Prime Minister. Even Ahmad bin Hasan al-Maimandī, recently released and restored to his previous post, stoutly opposed the idea of executing him. Unable to raise and substantiate any tangible charge against him, Mas'ūd, who was bent upon taking the life of Hasanak, revived the

intrigues of an *Amir* who bore him much jealousy (*Dastūr-ul-Wuzarā* in *E & D*, iv, 151)

* In his '*Dastūr-ul-Wuzarā*, Khwāndmīr has stated that during his *Wasirshūb* Hasanak had spoken ill of Mas'ūd before Sultān Mahmūd and that Mas'ūd satisfied the grudge he cherished against him when he became king (*E. & D*, iv, 153)

old charge of his having subscribed to the Carmathian creed. We are not in possession of any details about the charge, but *prima facie* and to all intents and purposes it was false and frivolous. Moreover, that episode had been closed during the reign of Sultān Mahmūd and there was no justification for reopening it.* Failing to substantiate this charge, Mas'ūd referred the matter to the Khalīfa of Baghdād and obtained his sanction for the execution of Hasanak†. The sanction of the Khalīfa was in itself a weighty argument in support of Hasanak's execution. Armed with the decree of the Khalīfa, the Sultān subjected the victim of his wrath to a great humiliation and ordered him to be stoned to death. When the victim

* See *supra*, p. 93. The gravamen of the charge against Hasanak was that he had received a robe of honour from Al-Zāhir, the Khalīfa of Cairo, but Mahmūd had sent the said robe of honour to the Khalīfa of Baghdād, who had ordered the execution of the recipient, and it had been burnt to ashes in a public square at Baghdād. The episode was thus closed and the case was *res judicata*. Mas'ūd was not justified in reopening the question and subjecting the ex-Prime Minister to such a fate.

† The Khalīfa of Baghdād had been annoyed when Hasanak was favoured with a robe of honour by the anti-Khalīfa of Cairo and he had written to Mahmūd on the subject. Mahmūd had appeased him by sending the robe in question to Baghdād where it had been burnt. Apparently the Khalīfa was not satisfied with the punishment. He gave full vent to his deep-seated resentment against Hasanak by ordering him to be stoned to death when the matter was referred to him by Mas'ūd.

was taken to the scaffold on the date fixed, a large number of people went to witness the catastrophe. So popular was he with the people that the spectators were filled with grief and indignation when they saw the ex-Prime Minister only with his turban and trousers on and his hands clasped together. They burst into an uproar, but were dispersed by the mounted guards. He was then taken to the gibbet and hanged. This inhuman and tragic act drew down upon its authors the curses of all those who loved and respected Hasanak.* The circumstances that surrounded the execution of Hasanak show that it was not possible even for

* Khwāja Bū Su'āl was one of his worst enemies who thirsted for his life. He vehemently advocated the execution of Hasanak. After his execution, Hasanak's head was chopped off and served up in a dish at a feast held by him to the complete horror of his guests. The head was again hung on the gibbet and it remained suspended there for seven years. Baihaqī informs us that his feet dropped off and his corpse was completely dried up so much so that very little was left of his body when it was taken down to be interred in the prescribed manner. When his mother learnt of his tragic fate, she burst into tears and in a terrible anguish she exclaimed "What a fortune was my son's, a king like Mahmūd gave him this world, and one like Mas'ūd the next" (*E & D*, II, 100). A poet of Nishāpur wrote the following elegy on Hasanak —

"They cut off the head of him who was the head of heads,
The ornament of his country, the crown of the age
Whether he was a Karmatian, Jew or Infidel,
'T was hard to pass from the throne to the scaffold"
(*M. I*, 123, note)

the Sultān to do away with the ex-Minister—so important was the institution of *Wizārat*. In order to do what he desired, Mas'ūd tried so many methods but failed and succeeded only when he shelved the responsibility on the shoulders of a more powerful person in the Muslim world—the Khalifa.* The Hasanak tragedy also shows how unsafe and uncertain life and office of the minister were under the later Ghaznawids.

In this connection we may appropriately point out that in the matter of appointing his *Wazir*, Mas'ud pursued the policy of his father. After the death of Ahmad *bin* Hasan al-Maimandī, he convened a council of his high officials, such as 'Arīz, the Commander of the army, and the Chief Minister of the Ceremonies. In their presence he expressed profound sorrow at the demise of his capable and trusted *Wazir*, paid a glowing tribute to him, spoke highly of his loyalty and love of truth, discipline and devotion to duty, ability and efficiency and then asked them to suggest the name of someone who might prove a suitable successor in the vacant office. After a long discussion, during which several names were suggested and rejected, the choice fell on Abū Nasr Ahmad *bin* Muhammad *bin* 'Abdus Samad, who had been the *Sahib-i-Diwan* of Hārūn, the

* *Tārīkh-i-Yamīnī* (Tehrān edition), 429, and *Tārīkh-i-Bahāqī*, 207

then Governor of Khwārizm. He was formally invited and asked to take over the charge of the vacant office.[†]

On his death, the ruler of Mekrān left two sons, viz., Isā and Abul 'Asākar, of whom the former commanded the confidence of the army and the respect of the people and was therefore successful in asserting his claims. Failing to cope with him successfully, the latter personally waited upon Mas'ūd and requested him to intervene on his behalf. In response to his request, the Sultān put a huge army at the disposal of Abul 'Asākar and ordered it to accompany him. Reaching near Mekrān, the Commander of the army conveyed the Imperial message to Isā, calling upon him to make a compromise with his brother, but he paid no heed to it. In the battle that was fought, Isā was killed and most of his men surrendered. Abul 'Asākar took possession of Mekrān and, as already agreed to, inserted the name of Mas'ūd in the *Khutba* and the coins, indicating that he was a vassal of the Sultān. All this happened in the year 422 A H (=1031 A C).[†] The same year also witnessed the annexation of Kirmān. Abū Kālījār *bīn* Sultān-ud-Daulah was defeated and put to flight by the Imperial army sent against him. Kirmān was occupied, but was lost again to the Ghaznawids

T F, I, 41, T M, 177-78

† I K, II, 274-75, T F I, 41

owing to the slackness of the Hindū army.*

'Alā-ud-Daulah, whom Sultān Mahmūd had left with Mas'ūd in Isfahān and who had made an unsuccessful attempt to carve out an independent kingdom for himself, was putting up with Abū Kalījār in Khozistān^o after his expulsion from Isfahān in the hope of receiving support from him. As soon as he heard of Mahmūd's death, he collected an army, took possession of Isfahān with its help and advanced towards Hamadān with a view to seize Ray. Mas'ūd's governor of that province inflicted a sharp defeat on him and compelled him to retreat to Isfahān. He was pursued thither and reduced to such straits that he withdrew to the fort of Qarohān in mean disguise and took shelter there. After these events Mas'ūd's sway was firmly established in Ray, Jurjān and Tabaristān. On three more occasions 'Alā-ud-Daulah tried to re-establish his authority and recover his lost possessions but failed. He was defeated and put to flight on every occasion.†

Majd-ud-Daulah, a former ruler of Isfahān whom Sultān Mahmūd had defeated and deprived of his sovereignty, tried to avail himself of the disturbed state of affairs occasioned by the death of the

* I K, II, xii, 274 ff, T. F, 1, 41

† I K, II, xii, 275 ff, T. F. 1, 41.

Great Sultān and aggravated by the struggle for succession between Mas'ūd and Muhammad. But he was badly defeated and put to flight by the Governor of Raiy who was entrusted with the command of the army sent against him.*

While Mas'ūd was involved in the fratricidal war, 'Alitigin, the ruler of Bukhārā, collected his forces and attacked Altūntāsh, the Governor of Khwārizm. After the new Sultān had firmly established his authority, he sent a huge army to Khwārizm and directed its Governor to lead a punitive expedition against Alitigin. When attacked by the Imperialists, the ruler of Bukhārā took to flight and a large part of his territory was occupied by Altūntāsh. After the conquest was completed, Altūntāsh returned to Khwārizm. On the way he was attacked by the soldiers of 'Alitigin who were lying in ambush and awaiting his return. He turned round and again dispersed them. Then he called his men together and said that he had received a grievous wound during the last encounter and that it was impossible for him to survive it. A peace was then concluded with 'Alitigin, according to which Bukhārā was handed over to Mas'ūd and the territory on the other side of Samarqand was given to 'Alitigin. Altūntāsh succumbed to the fatal wound he had received and his post was conferred upon his son, Hārūn, in recognition

Recovery
and loss of
Khwārizm

* I K., II, XII, 273-74

of his services. 'Abdul Jabbār, who was sent by the Central Government to act as his deputy, could not pull on with him and returned to Ghaznīn where he poisoned the Sultān's mind against his rival. Sultān Mas'ūd, without investigating the matter, ordered Shāh Malak to proceed against Hārūn. Khwārizm was attacked and occupied by force. Hārūn and his brother, Ismā'īl, took to flight and sought safety with Tughral Beg and Dāūd who, at their request, attacked Khwārizm and took possession of it.*

Sultān Mahmūd had constituted Jurjān† and Tabaristān into a separate province and placed it in charge of a Ziyārid Prince, called Dārā *bin* Minūchīhr *bin* Qābūs and married one of his daughters to him. When Mas'ūd ascended the throne, he confirmed Dārā in his possession. Availing himself of the disturbances in the Ghaznawid Empire, Dārā stopped to send tribute to Ghaznīn at the instigation of 'Alā ud-Daulah and his friend, Farhād. After quelling the disturbances of the Turkomans, Mas'ūd turned his attention towards Dārā. The Imperial army defeated the rebellious vassal and occupied Jurjān in 424-25 A H (=1034 A C) Pursued from place to place and reduced to utter helplessness, he sought and received royal forgiveness

* I K, II, xii, 279 ff, T. F, i, 41

† Jurjān (ancient Hyrcania) is also called Gurgān in some accounts. Its present capital is Astrābād.

on the condition of paying tribute regularly every year.*

When Sultān Mas'ūd turned his attention towards India he found that Ariyāraq, who had been put at the helm of affairs in India by Sultān Mahmūd, had become a perfect autocrat and begun to disobey the Imperial *firmāns*† With seductive wiles and sugar-coated words, he was wheedled out of India by Khwāja Ahmad Hasan and taken to Ghaznīn. There he was invited to a drinking feast and made to drink heavily. He was then bound in chains and sent to Ghūr and thrown into prison, where he was probably poisoned to death. The wealth he had accumulated during his viceroyalty of India was confiscated. His friend, Asıhtıgīn,‡ shared his fate soon afterwards. The officer who was next entrusted with the viceroyalty of the Indian Province was Ahmad Nıyāltıgīn, an experienced hand, who had acquired ample knowledge of public affairs

* *Vide* Z A, 99, T A, 12, E & D, iv, 196, T. F, i, 41, and L H P, ii, 169

† "Secure in possession of a vast territory without any restraining influences, the Ghaznavide Commander of Hind who was an ambitious man by nature had given proof of his ambitious designs even in the time of Mahmūd, but so great was the awe in which that mighty conqueror was held that the plans of Ariyarak were never allowed to mature" (M I, 123-24)

‡ T M, 97, T Y, (Delhi Lith Ed) 281 Sir W Haig wrongly calls him Asaftıgīn (C H I, iii, 28)

during his service under Mahmūd the Great. Khwāja Ahmad Hasan, the Grand *Wasīr*, invested him with the official robes of honour and instructed him to be true to the conditions of the covenant he had entered into with the Sultān. He also advised him not to encroach upon the jurisdiction of the Shīrāzī Qāzī,* the civil administrator who was a most quarrelsome colleague, to co-operate with the Superintendent of the Intelligence Department, whose duty was to keep the Sultān informed of all that happened in India, and to discharge his duties diligently and honestly. After administering the necessary advice, he addressed him the following warning "You must not say anything to any person respecting the political and revenue matters, so that no one's word may be heard against you, but you must perform all the duties of the commander, so that the fellow may not be able to put his hand upon your sinews and drag you down" Some of the Dailamite chiefs and head-strong slaves, who had been found guilty of sundry acts of disobedience, were sent with him to India and he was directed to keep a strict watch on their movements and to regulate their social activities in such a manner that they might not be able to create any trouble. Before sending him to India, the Khwāja prevailed upon him to leave his son in Ghaznīn, nominally on the pretext of giving him a suitable education but actually to keep

* His original name was Abul Hasan

him as a hostage so that his father might not have the audacity to rebel. Later when the governor-designate of India waited upon the Sultān, the latter addressed him in these words "Anmad, rejoice and be happy; be careful to understand the value of this favour; keep my image ever before your eyes and do good service so that you may attain to great honour." Despite the advice of the Sultān and of the Grand *Wasir* and the fact that his son was at the mercy of the higher authorities, he too, to quote Baihaqī, "turned away from the path of rectitude and took a crooked course." When he assumed the charge of his office, he found it hard to pull on with his powerful and quarrelsome colleague, Abul Hasan, the Shīrāzī Qāzī, who was a hot-headed and arrogant administrator. Since he refused to consult the Qāzī in the discharge of his duties, a quarrel ensued between the two and jeopardized the position of the Ghaznawids in India. The dispute related to the appointment of the command of an expedition. It was referred to the Central Government and the Qāzī was ordered to mind his own business and not to meddle in military affairs. Soon after that Niyāltıgīn undertook an expedition against Benāres, one of the sacred cities of the Hindūs, renowned for its riches all over India and untouched by the spears of the legions of Islām as yet.*

* Abul Fazl (*Ain-i-Akbari*) has stated that Mahmūd twice visited Benāres. This statement lacks contemporary confirmation. 'Utbi and Gardizi make no mention about

Success greeted the invader who returned laden with immense spoils. The Qāzī was shocked to hear of the success of his rival and spared nothing to poison Mas'ūd's mind against him and to bring him to disgrace. He sent his spies to Ghaznī to inform the Sultān that the Viceroy had possessed himself of a vast amount of wealth and begun to behave independently, giving himself out as a son of Sultān Mahmūd. Reports received from various sources confirmed Mas'ūd's doubts and he sent against him his Hindū general, Nath, who was defeated and killed. A number of other officers offered their services against the Indian Viceroy, but the choice fell on another Hindū, Tīlak,* the son of a barber, who was entrusted

this and all later historians are also silent on the subject. Such a silence would have been ignored if the observant Albertūnī had not made a categorical statement which clearly shows that Mahmūd had not seen that "Holy City." Writing in 421 A. H. (=1030 A. C., when Mahmūd died) he observes "Hindū sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country which have been conquered by us, and have fled to places which our hand cannot yet reach, to Kashmīr, Benāres and other places" (Sachau, 1, 22). Abul Fazl's evidence in this case cannot outweigh that of Albertūnī.

* There is some confusion about the name, parentage and religion of this general. He is called Tīlak bin Husain by Ferishta (*T. F.*, 1, 42), Talak bin Husain by Nizām-ud-Dīn Ahmad (*T. A.*, 12), and Tīlak son of a barber by Baihaqī (*E. & D.*, 11, 127). Still another perversion, viz., Jaisen, is found in some of the MSS. of the authorities quoted above. Gardīzī states that he was the son of Jahlan (*Z. A.*, 102). It appears that the words 'Husain' and 'Jaisen' are both mistranscriptions of Jahlan or Jahlansī, which

with the command of an army and ordered to proceed against India. His arrival at Lahore struck terror into the hearts of the supporters of Niyāltigin, who left their leader and sought forgiveness. Deserted by his followers and feeling sure that it was impossible for him to hold out long, Niyāltigin fled for life. He was hotly pursued by Tilak's forces, "which consisted mainly of Hindūs" and engaged in a fight at night. The Turkomans, who were still with him, left him in a body and implored forgiveness. When defeated, he managed to escape from the battle-field and successfully evaded the pursuit party. A reward of 500,000 *dirhams* was fixed for killing him and it was proclaimed that anyone who took his head to Tilak would receive that reward. The task was taken up in right earnest by the Jāts, who were thoroughly acquainted with the ins and outs of the desert and the wilds. They succeeded in tracing him out and bringing him to bay. They assaulted him with arrows, spears and swords. The Turkish blood boiled within him and he defended himself single-handed till he

is an old name frequently found in inscriptions and dynastic lists. (*Chronology of India* by C. M. Duff, 192, 297). That Tilak was 'a pure Hindū' admits of no doubt. Baihaqi (*E & D*, II, 128) informs us that Tilak rendered a signal service to Mas'ud by bringing all the Hindū Kātors (Thākurs) and many outsiders under his sway. This would have been impossible if he himself had not been a *patra* Hindū. Tilak alone was not a Hindū who was raised to dignity by the Ghaznavids. There were many Hindūs who enjoyed such favours and occupied responsible positions under them. (See P P M. T., 46).

fell fighting in a fresh encounter. The Jāts chopped off his head, sent it to Tilak and received from him a reward of 10,000 *dirhams* instead of the promised sum, 500,000 *dirhams*—that too after much haggling. Mas'ūd received the news of Tilak's victory with great satisfaction. He sent congratulatory letters to Tilak and expressed great joy over his success.

A reference may appropriately be made to the official career of Tilak. Originally a Hindū of humble origin, he was employed by Sultān Mahmūd and promoted to high rank by him in appreciation of his versatile accomplishments. He was a man of handsome appearance and charming manners. Khwāja Ahmad Hasan was literally enamoured of him. He made him his private secretary and employed him as an official interpreter between the State and the Hindūs. A gold-embroidered robe, a jewelled necklace, a fine canopy and a precious parasol were given to him as marks of distinction and kettle-drums were beaten and ensigns of gilded tops were set afloat at his residence as indications of his superiority. "Thus", says Dr Ishwari Prasad, "was a Hindū entrusted with an important command... .. This elevation of men of humble birth to high rank on the ground of merit alone was a principle which was invariably followed by Muslim administrators in India."* The

* *M. I.*, 128-29.

elevation of talented Hindūs to high posts and positions was not viewed with surprise by the broad-minded Muslims of the day. The philosopher Bahāqī, referring to the rise of Tilak, thus expresses himself: "Wise men do not wonder at such facts because no body is born great, men become such. But it is important that they should leave a good name behind."*

Elated by Tilak's success in India and ignoring, consciously or unconsciously, the dangers which seriously threatened the Ghaznawid possessions in the west, Mas'ūd made up his mind to lead an expedition to the 'Virgin Fort' of Hānsī,† and thus fulfil the vow which he had once taken during his illness. In vain did the Khwāja try to impress upon his mind the impolicy of such a step. "The vow is upon my own person", he said, and, advising his ministers and high officials to co-operate with one another and carry on the business of the State efficiently during his absence, he invested the Khwāja with plenary powers and set out at the head of a huge army in 1037 A. C. and reached the town of Hānsī after a long and arduous journey. The fort was considered as impregnable by the Hindūs, but the Musalmāns

* *Ibid.*, 128

† The city of Hānsī is situated 11 miles to the east of Hīsār. It has a ruined castle. (Tieffenthaler: *Description Historique et Géographique De L'Inde*, Vol. 1, p. 134).

laid mines under it at five places, took it by storm within ten days and seized enormous spoils. Entrusting the charge of the newly conquered place to a reliable officer, Mas'ūd advanced against Sonpat,* which was situated in the vicinity of Delhi, and occupied it without experiencing the least opposition from its chief who is said to have fled into the forest at the approach of the invader, leaving behind his treasure which was taken possession of by the Muslim soldiers. After winning these victories and fulfilling his vow, Mas'ūd marched back to Ghaznī and gave himself up wholly to drinking and merry-making.†

Hardly had Mas'ūd ascended the throne and assumed the reins of government when he found himself confronted with the Saljūq menace. The Saljūqs had begun to make encroachments on the dominions of Sultān Mahmūd towards the close of his reign and disturbed his peace of mind. Taking advantage of his death, they began to make inroads into Khurāsān and create disturbances at many places. At first they did not attract Mas'ūd's personal attention and his generals were able to establish

* The city of Sonpat is situated to the north of Delhi, not far from it (*Ibid*, 1, 133)

† The Indian expedition, despite the victories won there, proved to be a colossal blunder. During Mas'ūd's absence the Saljūqs strengthened their position and ultimately established their authority. (*Vide infra*)

his authority in the refractory provinces of the west, as we have already noted. The peace made by them under their leader, 'Alitigin,* with the Ghaznawid Commander, Altüntāsh,† in 1032 A C proved to be a truce, for they continued to carry their raids into the Ghaznawid Empire. The people of the outlying provinces complained against their aggression and Mas'ūd made up his mind to advance against them in person. He first attacked Transoxiana and occupied it, but his soldiers suffered enormously on account of snow and cold. About that time Balkh was invaded by the Saljūqs under their leader, Dāūd. Post-haste the Sultān proceeded towards Balkh. In his absence Tughral Beg, the Saljūq, attacked and plundered Ghaznīn. When the Sultān reached Balkh, Dāūd marched back to Marv. After restoring law and order in Balkh, Herāt and Nishāpur, he turned his attention towards Tughral Beg. At Dandanqān he was confronted by the Turkomans. Deserted by many of his followers, including an Indian army, Mas'ūd suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of his enemies on the 23rd of March, 1040 A C.‡ He marched

* Dr Ishwari Prasad (*M I.*, 132) calls him Alaptagin, but does not cite his authority. See *I K.*, II, xii, 279 ff and *T F*, i, 41, where his name is given as 'Alitigin.

† Dr Ishwari Prasad calls him Iltutmish (*Ibid*) without mentioning his authority. See *I. K.*, II, xii, 279 ff and *T. F*, i, 41, where his name is written as Altüntāsh.

‡ Authorities are at variance about the date as well as the place of this battle.

Date.—Three dates are most frequently found, viz ,

back to Marv and then proceeded to Ghaznīn *via* Ghūr. Far from being able to raise an army strong enough to stem the rising tide of the Saljūqs, he could not now quell the disturbances that cropped up about Ghaznīn. Place after place slipped away from his possession in rapid succession and he was constrained to concentrate his attention on India. Eventually he decided to withdraw towards India. In vain again did the Khwāja insist on his stay at the capital and remind him of the detrimental consequences of his obstinacy.*

430, 431 and 432 A. H. I have preferred the second, i. e., 431 (=1040 A. C.), because it is based on better and more reliable sources, *viz.*, *T. M.*, 777, *T. N.*, 1, 92, *E & D.*, 14, 198, and *T. F.*, 1, 43.

Place: The author of the *Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri* (*E & D.*, 1, 273) locates the site of the battle at Tāliqān and he has been followed by many modern writers, including Sir W. Haig (*C. H. I.*, III, 31). The more authoritative opinion, however, is in favour of Dandāqān. Gardīzī (*Z. A.*, 107) Baihaqī (*T. M.*, 792-94), Nizām-ud-Dīn Ahmad (*T. A.*, 25 of B. I. S.), and Ferishta (*T. F.*, 1, 43) all locate the battle-field at the latter place. It is also called Dandāqān in some MSS. It has been described by Abul Fida as a small town of Khurāsān, famous for its cotton fabrics. It is about forty miles north-west of Marv-ur-Rūd or Marūchak (Marv-i-Kūchak) on the Marūchak-Sarakhs Road. The town of Tāliqān is about fifty miles south-east of Marv-ur-Rūd. Sir T. Holdich calls it Dandāqān and says that it was near Ak-tepe, which is not far from Panjdeh (*Gates of India*, 244-46).

* The Khwāja's prognostication proved only too true. Subsequent events testified to the soundness of his advice and showed that Mas'ūd's fears were ill-founded and his

After appointing Maudūd to the government of Balkh, Majdūd to that of Multān and Amīr Izad to that of Ghaznīn and making other necessary arrangements, Mas'ūd proceeded towards India bag and baggage. Hardly had he crossed the Indus and reached Marīgala * when his own guards, consisting of Turkish and Hindū slaves, robbed him of the treasure he was carrying with him on the backs of camels. Then followed a wild confusion and a general mutiny of the army. While Mas'ūd was taken prisoner and sent to the fort at Girī,† his brother Muhammad, whom he had blinded before his accession, was brought out

flight from Ghaznīn was an act of folly and not of wisdom, for the Saljūqs were pre-occupied with the conquest of Persia and adjoining places and Ghaznīn was immune from their attacks (*Vide* Chapter IX)

* Marīgala (or Marīkala, as it is in some MSS) is a pass situated between Attock and Rāwalpindī, a few miles east of Hasan Abdāl. Alberūnī (Sachau, I, 302) identifies it with Takashshila (Taxila). "The name is preserved in that of a pass and a range of hills about two miles to the south of Shāhdherī and a few miles east of Hasan Abdāl" (A G I, 111, T N, Raverty's Translation, 95 note, and S I M H, 193-94)

† This place has not been satisfactorily identified and its site is not precisely located. In his *Notes on Afghānistān*, p 131 note, Raverty identifies it with Gībarkot in Kunar (Kāfiristān). From the text of T M (E & D, II, 273) it appears that it was not far from Marīkala or Marīgala where Mas'ūd's treasure was looted by his own guards. Professor Hodivala's postulation that it must be Girī, i.e. Shāhbāz Girī or Kāpar da Girī, which is situated in the district of Mardān about 40 miles east of

and put on the throne. Being blind, Muhammad could not conduct and control the affairs of the government personally. He therefore delegated his powers to his son, Ahmad, one of whose early acts was to put an end to the life of the deposed king * Muhammad, who was unaware of all this, is said to have cursed the perpetrators of the crime †

Mas'ūd followed with great wisdom and vigour the illustrious traditions of his talented father. He selected his *Wazīr* in the same way as his father. He was also in the habit of consulting his ministers and seeking their advice on all important matters, though he did always follow their advice. Fortunately for him his ministers were not mere mediocres or flatterers: They were men of courage, character and culture who never hesitated to disagree with or even oppose him whenever they thought he was following a wrong course. His decisions to lead an expedition against Hānsī and to leave Ghaznī for India were openly opposed by the Khwāja, and on the second occasion he was reminded of the disastrous consequences of the

Peshāwar does not seem to be far from the mark (S I M H, 194-95)

* This was in the year 433 A. H. (=1041-42 A. C.). In his *Ḥabīb-us-Sijār* Khwāndmīr confirms this (E & D, II, 198) Minhāj-us-Sirāj (T N) puts it in the year 432 A. H. which is apparently incorrect.

† T F, I, 44.

Indian expedition. It must, however, be recorded to his credit that though he over-ruled his ministers, ignored their advice, turned down their proposals and had his own way, he never lost his balance or sense of proportions and never subjected them to any punishment or humiliation on that account. In fact, we do not come across a single instance in which he punished or even reproached his ministers for opposing his proposals[‡]. The ministers of Mas'ūd, moreover, exercised full powers in the revenue and financial departments of the Central Government and managed the administrative affairs of the outlying provinces of the Empire independently without the least fear of incurring royal wrath or losing their office. They had complete control over the auditors, accountants and treasurers, and the wardrobe, elephant and horse stables and slaves were under their supervision. In short, everything that was required for the dignity of the Crown was to be provided under their instructions and orders[†]. Above all, they enjoyed full regal powers in the absence of the king when he happened to be out on an expedition. Khwāja Ahmad, to quote one instance, was easily accessible to all and sundry and his advice was sought and allowed full weight by the Sultān in the appointment of important officials of the State. Under the guidance and influence of the Khwāja

[‡] *T. B.*, 266, 347, 312-13, 319-21, *S. A. M. A.*, 170. See also *supra*, pp. 203, 206

[†] *T. B.*, 181. See also *supra* pp. 186-89.

the institution of *Wizārat* gained a great deal in power and prestige. This was because he very jealously safeguarded its dignity. He was the first *Wasir* who flatly refused to accept that office as long as the Sultān did not define his jurisdiction and describe his powers in writing.* After a long discussion on the question, which was carried on in black and white, the Sultān found no alternative but to fall in with his proposal. If that practice had been followed by others, the institution of *Wizārat* would have gained great strength and stability and paved the way for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.†

Like his father, Mas'ūd too was a great patron of learning and a zealous protector of the learned. Among the celebrated scholars, who flourished under his patronage and dedicated their works to him, may be mentioned Abū Rihān Alberūnī,‡ and Abū Muhammad

* See *supra*, pp 186-87

† For a discussion on the subject, see *S A M. A.*, 156 ff

‡ We have had an occasion to refer to the literary attainments of Alberūnī (See *supra*, pp 114-16) Dr E C Sachau, who has translated two of his works, calls him "a champion of the truth, a sharply cut character of a highly individual stamp, full of real courage and not refraining from dealing hard blows when anything which is good or right seems to him to be at stake" and says that "if in these days a man began studying Sanskrit and Hindū learning with all the help afforded by modern literature and science many years would pass before he

Nāsihi. From the literary works of Abū Rihān we derive a good deal of information about the progress of Arabic as well as Persian literature under his direct encouragement. The same authority further informs us that Indian mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, astrology, pharmacology, medicine and Greek sciences were sedulously studied by inquisitive Muslim scholars and that a number of Indian as well as Greek works were translated into Arabic and Persian. "During his reign" says Khwāndmīr, the author of the *Rauzat-us-Safā*, "so many colleges, mosques and religious edifices were built in the various parts of his dominions that it is impossible to enumerate them."*

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| Character & estimate | Sultān Mas'ūd was endowed with uncommon physical power. The contemporary historian, Baihaqī, informs us that he wielded a mace, weighing twenty <i>mans</i> and that in a hand to hand fight |
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would be able to do justice to the antiquity of India to such an extent and with such a degree of accuracy as al-Bīrūnī has done in his *Indica*." Alberūnī was indeed a literary giant with a prodigious brain power. For "a just and sympathetic appreciation of his character and attainments", see Dr Sachau's Prefaces to his translations of the *Asār-ul-Bāqiyā* and the *Indica*. Also see *L H P*, 1, 101 ff.

* *E & D*, 1v, 138-39. The testimony of Khwāndmīr is supported by Ferishta who says "In the beginning of his reign Mas'ūd built many mosques and endowed several colleges which he caused to be erected in the different cities of his dominions" (*T F*, 1, 44)

with a tiger he smashed the skull of the beast with a single blow * Fond of drinking and music, he frequently resorted to the Firozī Garden, his father's most favourite pleasure-resort, and sat there under a green pavilion, surrounded by his servants. After reviewing the forces, he used to sit down with his favourite friends to a sumptuous feast, which was invariably accompanied by music and drinking. Obstinate and self-willed, full of ambition and adventurous spirit, he was well-known for his valour and war-like zeal. He was so brave and outspoken that once he offended his father by strongly supporting the maxim that 'kingdom belongs to the longest sword'. He was a magnificent prince. During his reign the Ghaznawid Court retained the splendour it enjoyed under Mahmūd the Great. He used to consult his ministers on all matters of moment and sought their advice. He did not put them to harm even when they turned down his proposals and he had to over-rule them.†

* *T M*, 141 'Twenty *mans*' seems to be an exaggeration. Ferīhta seems to be correct when he says "Mas'ūd's mace was so heavy that no one else could lift it up with a single hand" (*T F*, 1, 40)

† Dr Tripathi, who has discussed the point at length, says —

"In most cases the Sultān overruled them (ministers) and had his own way which ultimately brought him to a sad end. But no minister is known to have been driven out of office or penalized or even fallen from the Sultān's estimation for having opposed his proposals" (*S A M S*, 170)

CHAPTER IX

SULTAN MAUDUD & HIS SUCCESSORS

When Mas'ūd was murdered under the orders of Ahmad son of Muhammad, his son Maudūd was away at Balkh. As soon as Maudūd heard the sad news of the execution of his father, he vowed to wreak woeful vengeance on the murderers and marched post-haste to the Imperial Capital at the head of his army. In an encounter at Nagarhār* he inflicted a crushing defeat on his rivals and put most of them to death. He also slew his uncle, Muhammad, and all his sons except 'Abdur Rahīm whom he spared because he had shown some consideration to Mas'ūd during his captivity. On the site where he won victory over his rivals he founded a town called Fatehābād or "Town of Victory" and built a big rest-house there for

* The author of the *Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri* (E & D., II, 274) calls it Takarhārūd which Sir Henry Elliot has wrongly identified with Bakhrāla (*Ibid.*, foot-note). Takarhārūd is a miswriting of Nagarhār (نجرهار) or Nagrahara, which is said to be the old name of a town and a district in 'Afghānistān, situated near modern Jalālābād (G D A. M. A., s. n). Baihaqī locates the site of the battle in Dīnār, which is also written as Depūr and Dūnpūr. Professor Hodivala suggests that the last two names are the forms of Udayanapura and that the town still survives under the name 'Adīnāpur', which is represented by Bālābāgh, 12 miles from modern Jalālābād (S. I-M H, 195). Nagrahara is also written as Nangrahār

the comfort and convenience of travellers.'

Soon after his accession to the throne of Ghazni, Maudūd made Abū Nasr *Appointment of Wasirs* *bin Ahmad 'Abdus Samad* his *Wasir*, but dismissed him in 1041 A. C. and threw him in prison where he met his death. The next man who was honoured with the dignity was Khwāja Abū Tahir *bin Mastaufi*. Tahir enjoyed that dignity till 1044 A. C. when the vacancy was filled by Khwāja 'Abdul Fateh *Abdur Razzāq bin Ahmad bin Hasan al-Maimandi*. The last named remained in office till the close of Maudūd's reign.†

Maudūd next turned his attention towards India. Nāmī, the then Governor *-Governor of the Punjab* of the Punjab appointed by Muhammad, was defeated and slain

in some accounts, but the more authoritative opinion is in favour of the former. Nangrahar and Nek-nahar seem to be later corruptions (*Ibid*).

* *T N* in *E & D*, II, 273-74, *T M*, 867, and *T F*, I, 40. The town of Fatehabad has continued to our own times. It is situated some four miles south of Bālābāgh (*Masson Journeys to Baluchistan etc*, 184).

† The active interference of the *Wasir* in the matter of succession occasioned bitter hostilities against him and jeopardized his position, rendering long enjoyment of power very rare. Placed between the devil and the deep sea—the jealousies of the nobles and the suspicions of the Sultan,—he found himself in a most awkward position. As a result, his power and prestige suffered a great deal (*S A M A* 173-74).

by Abū Nasr Ahmad *bin* Muhammad, the new Governor appointed by the new Sultān and sent to India for the purpose. But Maudūd's brother, Majdūd, whom his father had appointed to the government of the Indian Province had captured Thānesar and was now at Hānsī, seeking an opportunity to attack Delhi On receipt of information that his brother had sent an army against him, Majdūd lost no time in returning to Lāhore. He reached there on July 27, 1042 A C and was found dead in his bed on the morning of the 30th, one or two days after the arrival of Maudūd's army. The cause of his death is shrouded in mystery. What it was due to—heat-stroke, heart-failure or some rapidly fatal disease or the secret agency of his brother—is a matter of speculation.*

At the time of Maudūd's accession the kingdom of Ghaznīn was exposed to the onslaught of the Saljūqs, but as good luck would have it, their attention, almost wholly occupied elsewhere, was not drawn towards Ghaznīn. The victorious Saljūqs divided their newly conquered territory into four minor kingdoms under the suzerainty of Tughral Beg. While Tughral Beg hastened

* Majdūd had proved himself a capable commander and an energetic officer during his viceroyalty of the Indian Province and it appeared probable that the troops sent against him by his brother would declare for him. Under the circumstances, it is not wholly unsafe to say that Maudūd's agents had been at work (C. H. I., III, 32)

to complete the conquest of western Persia and was occupied in the capture of Baghdād and the overthrow of the Roman Empire at the head of the main forces of his tribe, Abū 'Alī, another adventurer, who had attained to the sovereignty of Herāt, Sīstān and Ghūr, was left to struggle with the Ghaznavids for asserting his own sovereignty. Maudūd married the daughter of Chaqar Beg.* The marriage was responsible for establishing friendly relations between the Sultān and the Saljūqs. Thus it was that Maudūd was able to maintain his position at Ghaznīn and to recover Transoxiana.†

While the Sultān was occupied in the west, Mahipāl, the Rāja of Delhi, took advantage of his absence from India and over-ran the Punjāb, then an important province of the Ghaznavid Empire. On this occasion the Rāja successfully appealed to the superstition of the Hindūs and revived their spirits by convincing them that their *Deotā* (deity) was pleased with them and would help them in driving the Musims out of India ‡

* In some accounts he is also called Chaghar Beg. Ferishta calls him Ja'far Beg Saljūqī (*T F*, i, 44). He seems to have followed *I K* (II, xii, 291)

† De Guignes Vol, ii, p 190, and *H I*, 301-302

‡ Here is a brief description of the device. The Rāja of Delhi called together his courtiers and informed them that in a dream at night the *Deotā* (deity) of Nagarkot had told him that he had stayed at Ghaznīn so long simply for the sake of bringing about the down-fall of the Ghaznavids

With the help of the neighbouring Rājas he was able to take possession of Hānsī, Thānesar and Nagarkot and to lay siege to Lāhore. But for the bravery of the Muslim garrison, the fate of the last fort of Musalmāns in India would have been sealed. The successful defence was due to the report, regarding the approach of the Sultān with a large army, which was later known to have been a mere ruse, and

in Central Asia, that he had accomplished that task and was now anxious to overthrow the Ghaznawid power in India as well, and that the Hindūs should make common cause and expel the Musalmāns from the fort of Nagarkot, so that he might return to his previous abode. The Rājā's words were taken for Gospel truth and a wave of enthusiasm ran through the hearts of the Hindūs. Taking into his confidence some expert architects and a clever Brahman, the Rājā managed to set up at night in a garden in the neighbourhood of Nagarkot a replica of the idol transported to Ghaznīn by Sultān Mahmūd and set afloat the news that it had come there by a miracle. Next morning the idol attracted the notice of the people who hailed it with joy mingled with surprise. Princes with valuable presents, poured in from many places and paid homage to it. The Rājā of Delhi also paid a visit to it barefooted. To everyone who visited it, the Brahman in charge said that the *Deota* had ordered the Hindūs to expel the Musalmāns from the fort of Nagarkot by force and take possession of it. Thus inspired and invigorated, the Hindūs prepared themselves for the fight and volunteered themselves in large numbers. While the volunteers swelled the ranks of the Rājā's army, the presents offered to the *Deota* by the votaries immensely augmented the resources of war. The result of this Machiavellian device was that the Musalmāns who occupied a fortified position, were defeated and driven out. (For details, see T F, 1, 45).

partly to the fact that the Musalmāns, who had hitherto subdued the Hindūs, disdained the very thought of being defeated by them. The Rāja and his confederates were defeated, put to flight and pursued to safe distances. In 1048 A. C. Maudūd appointed his sons, Mansūr and Mahmūd, to the governments of Peshāwar and Lāhore respectively and also sent Abū 'Alī Hasan, the *Kotwal* of Ghaznīn, to India "to curb the aggression of the Hindūs." The *Kotwal* was well known for his sternness. He acquitted himself creditably and successfully accomplished the task he was entrusted with. On his return to Ghaznīn, however, he fell a victim to an intrigue and suffered imprisonment, where he met his death.*

We have referred to Maudūd's successes in the west and said that they were largely due to the fact that the Saljūqs were occupied elsewhere. We may now revert to that subject and describe his wars with the Saljūqs who had begun to overrun the Ghaznawid provinces, so much so that even his matrimonial connection with the Saljūq leader proved of little use. In 1042 A. C. he launched a campaign against them, which continued to the close of his reign. At first the task of reducing them to submission was entrusted to Arīstīn who defeated them and

* T. F., i, 44-46, I K., II xii, 291-3, and C. H. I., iii, 32-33

occupied Balkh and had the *Khutba* read in the name of the Sultān. Not long after their defeat they again appeared in the neighbourhood of Balkh in such large numbers that Arīṭigīn was constrained to apply for reinforcements, which were not sent for some unknown reasons. The result was that the Saljūqs overran Balkh and came as far as Ghaznīn with a view to overthrow the Ghaznawid domination. But they were again defeated and put to flight by the Imperial forces sent against them. In 1044 A. C. the Sultān sent another officer to Bust. The latter reached Sīstān and brought it under the sway of the Sultān. Next year the Saljūqs again raised their heads. They advanced on Ghaznīn and when they reached near Bust they were opposed by its Governor, named Tughral*. After a pitched and bloody battle, in which numerous lives were lost, the Saljūqs suffered a terrible defeat and took to their heels. Tughral subdued Qusdār also and brought a number of

* Tughral was a slave and servant of Sultān Mahmūd. He was appointed Commander of the troops of Khurāsān by Maudūd. Brave, outspoken, freedom-loving and adventurous, he tried to carve out an independent kingdom for himself. He contracted friendly relations with the Saljūqs and rebelled against the Sultān. When defeated and driven out, he went over to the Saljūqs and joined forces with them against the Ghaznawids. He should not be confused with Tughral Beg the Saljūq. Sir W. Haig says that "he does not appear to have been acting, in his rebellion, as an agent of the Saljūqs" on the ground that "his successes appear to have included some victories over the Saljūqs" (*C H I*, III, 34).

prisoners to Ghaznīn. In 1016 A. C. he was again sent to Bust, but this time he showed signs of rebellion and was therefore defeated and put to flight by an officer sent against him.* The same year also witnessed the subjugation of Ghūr by Bastīgīn, who was entrusted with that work. Since he distinguished himself as a commander in the expedition against Ghūr, he was selected to lead the Imperial forces against the Saljūqs. Success greeted him and he was able to disperse the hordes of his enemy. In 1017 A. C. the Amīr of Qusdār rebelled; but when attacked, he fled and sought forgiveness, which was not grudged. The Saljūq menace was still there and now the Sultān decided to end it by conducting the campaign against the Saljūqs in person, but he had a sudden attack of colic in the fort of Siālkot, where he had gone to take possession of the treasure that was there with a view to finance the expedition against the Saljūqs without experiencing any difficulty. When the disease took a serious turn and the pain became acute, he dropped the idea and returned to Ghaznīn, entrusting the campaign against the Saljūqs to his *Wasīr*, 'Abdur Razzāq. He succumbed to the fatal disease on the 22nd of December, 1049 A. C. He enjoyed a brief but busy reign of about eight years.†

* The name of this officer as given by Ferishta is 'Alī bin Khudim Rabi' (T. F., I, 10)

† I. K., II, xii, 291, 293, and T. F., I, 15-45

On the death of Maudūd his son Abū Ja'far Mas'ūd, who was then four years of age, was proclaimed king in accordance with the will of his father and his mother began to exercise the powers of regency. But this arrangement, made by 'Alī b. Khādīm Rabi', was set aside by the nobles of Ghaznīn, led by Bastīgīn, who were not consulted in the matter of succession. The successful party deposed the young king and raised his uncle, Abul Hasan 'Alī, to the throne of Ghaznīn. The minor had a reign of a few days.*

Abul Hasan 'Alī enjoyed a brief reign of two years†. At his accession 'Alī b. Khādīm Rabi', who had identified himself with the cause of the minor king, collected as much of wealth as he could and fled to Peshāwar with a party of nobles and slaves on account of fear. There he reduced the

* The duration of his reign is a subject of controversy. According to Minhāj-us-Sirāj (*T N* 10), it was two months. Hamdullah Mastaufī (*T G*, 40), says that it extended over two years. Ibn Khaldūn (*I K*, II, xii, 293) says that it lasted for 5 days. Ferishta (*T F*, i 46) says that Mas'ūd II ruled for five or six days. It is difficult to give the precise duration of his reign, but it can be safely said that it did not exceed a month at the most (*Vide* Raverty's translation of *T N*, 97, f n 4, *T A*, 31, and *K T*, \\\).

† Minhāj-us-Sirāj's statement (*T N*, 16) that Mas'ūd II and 'Alī exercised joint sovereignty does not seem to be correct, for the arrangement was most unlikely. (See Raverty's translation of *T N*, 97, f n 4)

Afghāns to submission and established his sway over the territory as far as Multān and Sind. The Sultān sent for his brothers, Marḡān Shāh and Izad Shāh, and honoured them. He resorted to a lavish distribution of wealth in order to win the good-will of the people, but it served no purpose. His uncle, 'Abdur Rashīd, came to Ghaznīn, deposed him and ascended the throne.

The first thing that 'Abdur Rashīd † did after ascending the throne was to effect the arrest of Abul Hasan, who had run away at his arrival and to imprison him in a fort. Next he turned his attention towards India. First he won over 'Alī bin Khādīm Rābī to his side and then sent Nūshīgīn to take over the government of Lāhore. He was accompanied by an army of distinguished soldiers. Within a couple of days he recovered Nagarkot or Kāngra, which the Hindūs had occupied during the recent troubles, and established his authority in the Punjāb. Shortly afterwards, the chief, Tughrāl 'the Ingrate', who

* *T F*, I, 46-47, and *I K*, II, vii, 293.

† According to Ferishta, Sultān 'Abdur Rashīd was a son of Sultān Mahmūd and was confined in a fort between Bust and Isfaraīn by Maudūd. The same authority further informs us that Maudūd had made a will in support of his succession during his life-time. It is, however, not explained why he was imprisoned by the same man who had made a will in his favour or why the will was made when he was not on good terms with him (*Vide T F*, I, 47).

had been sent to Sīstān to reduce it to submission, revolted and began to mature plans for the conquest of Ghaznīn. The conquest of Sīstān had placed enough of the sinews of war at his disposal, and he boldly advanced with his army and inflicted a defeat on 'Abdur Rashīd and entered Ghaznīn in triumphant procession *

The victorious rebel crowned himself at Ghaznīn and slaughtered 'Abdur Tughrāl 'the Ghaznīn and slaughtered 'Abdur Ingrate' Rashīd as well as all other princes of Mahmūd's family who happened to fall into his hands. He contracted *Nikāh* with Mas'ūd's daughter and sent sugar-coated compliments to Nūshṭigīn Karkhī, who had set out from Lāhore and reached Peshāwar in obedience to the orders of Sultān 'Abdur Rashīd. While making a reply to his letter, Nūshṭigīn sent secret instructions to Mas'ūd's daughter, asking her to put an end to the life of Tughrāl. He also sent similar instructions to the adherents of the cause of Mahmūd's family. The result was that their sense of honour and loyalty was touched

* I. K., II, xii, 294-95, T F, 1, 47 When inquired as to how he entertained the ambition to rule, Tughrāl calmly made the following reply "At the time that 'Abdur Rashīd was sending me forth to do battle against Alp Arslān and Dāūd, and was giving me my instructions and had placed his hand in mine, terror had overcome him to that degree, that I could hear his very bones rattling from the state of trembling he was in. I knew this pusillanimous man was incapable of sovereignty, and the ambition of reigning entered my heart" (T N., 100, and T. F., 1, 47)

and they all made up their mind to put the usurper to death. On the eventful day of Nauroz, when Sultān Mahmūd had ascended the throne, they actually succeeded in murdering Tughral, who had a reign of only forty days.*

A few days after this event Nūshtigīn arrived Farrukhzād in Ghaznīn. He called together the grandees of Ghaznīn and made a search for the surviving descendants of Subuktigīn. Three princes were found as prisoners in different forts. They were Farrukhzād,† Ibrāhīm and Shujā'. The choice fell on the first-named and he was forthwith raised to the throne and proclaimed king. At his accession in 1052 A. C., Farrukhzād entrusted the administrative machinery of the kingdom to Nūshtigīn, who was decidedly the most devoted votary of the descendants of Mahmūd. Buoyed up with the hopes of retrieving the fallen fortunes of his

* T G, 403, and T F, 1, 47.

† For Farrukhzād, see *Coins of the Ghazni Kings*, Nos 97 and 98. Some authorities have omitted the name of this king from the list of the Sultāns of Ghaznīn. He preceded Ibrāhīm and followed 'Abdur Rashīd—a fact which is established by numismatic evidence. The Persian authorities, it may be noted here, are at variance in regard to the list of the Ghaznawid kings and I have, therefore, relied upon numismatic evidence, which is the safest and most reliable course (C O C in B M, 1, 234). According to Khwāndmīr (R S) Sultān Farrukhzād was the son of Mas'ūd and according to Hamdullah Mastaufī (T G) he was the son of 'Abdur Rashīd (See T F, 1, 48).

family by recovering the lost provinces of Ghaznīn, he plunged himself into a life-long struggle with his hereditary enemies, the Saljūqs. Taking advantage of the disturbances at Ghaznīn, Chaqar Beg Dāūd undertook an expedition against Ghaznīn. On hearing of his approach, Nūshtigin set out with his forces and in a hotly contested battle, which lasted from sunrise till sunset, he dispersed the Saljūqs and won a decisive victory, which immensely enhanced the prestige of the House of Ghaznīn. Next he led an army against Khurāsān, where, in an encounter with the Saljūqs, headed by Kalīsaraq, he defeated them and took their leader and many others prisoners. The progress of the Ghaznawid arms was, however, arrested by the rising genius of Alp Arslān who was sent by his father, Chaqar Beg Dāūd, after the defeat of Kalīsaraq. Arslān won an indecisive victory and then retired. A peace-treaty was then concluded and faithfully observed by the parties. A plot was hatched against Farrukhzād by his slaves, who, one day, entered the *Hummām* where he was and attacked him. The Sultān drew out his sword and defended himself successfully. He put the assailants to the sword but did not long survive the incident. He died of colic in 1059 A. C. after a reign of six years. His *Wazirs* were Hasan *bin* Mehrān and Abū Bakr *bin* Sāleh.*

* K T, 2 ff, T N in E & D, ii, 276 ff, I K., II, xii, 297-298 (translator's note), and T F, i, 47-48

Farrukhzād was succeeded by his brother, Ibrahim. Ibrāhīm, who was 'a professed devotee', endowed with a rare sense of justice, piety and kindness. The new Sultān renewed the peace-treaty with the Saljūqs and in order to harmonize his relations with them still further, he arranged a marriage between his son, Mas'ūd, and the daughter of Malak Shāh, son of Alp Arslān. After establishing friendly relations with the Saljūqs, Ibrāhīm turned his attention towards India with a view to conquer the hitherto unconquered places. In 1079 A C he personally went there and captured the forts of Ajūdhan (Pāk Patan) and Rūpāl and some other places, displaying great wisdom and valour during the campaign. On his return he brought with him a vast amount of booty and a large number of prisoners to Ghaznīn. Ibrāhīm is rightly said to have been a great king. He set in order the machinery of administration which was completely out of gear and "fully established the authority of the Crown over the recalcitrant tribes." According to Qāzī Mīnhāj, "the affairs of the empire of the Great Mahmūd assumed fresh vigour during his reign." As a man of learning, piety and peaceful disposition, he passed most of his time in making copies of the *Qur-ān* and practising the art of penmanship. He was a great lover of learning and a liberal patron of letters. He is said to have been the author of a book called *Dastūr-ul-Wuzarā* ¹. On his death,

¹ The *Dastūr-ul-Wuzarā* was a "Hand Book of

which took place on the 25th of August, 1099 A C he left a number of sons and daughters.†

Ibrāhīm was succeeded by a man of more merits and morals. At his accession Mas'ud III the new king, 'Alā-ud-Daulah Mas'ūd III, confirmed the servants of the State appointed by his predecessor in their respective posts and positions. He married the sister of Sultān Sanjar and thus ensured the security of his kingdom against the inroads of the Saljūqs. Peace with the Saljūqs enabled him to turn his attention towards India. He appointed his general, Tughātigin, as the *Sipah-Salar* or Commander of the forces of Lahore. The said general set out, crossed the Ganges and reached a place which no Muslim, except Mahmūd, had yet touched. After raiding a number of places, he returned to Lahore‡. While his general was winning victories for him, the Sultān himself revised the

Political Science" meant for the guidance of ministers in the art of administration. It is one of the 93 works drawn upon by Awfī (*Vide J. H.*, 67-68, 224)

* *E. & D.*, II, 510, *J. H.*, 67-68, 224, *I. K.*, II, XII, 298 (translator's note), and *T. F.*, I, 49-50.

† *T. G.*, 404, and *T. N.*, 21. Ferishta (*T. F.*, I, 49) and Nizām-ud-Dīn Ahmad (*T. A.*, 17) give 481 A H as well as 492 A H as the dates of Sultān Ibrāhīm's death, but do not say which of the two dates is correct. Numismatic evidence testifies to the correctness of the second, i. e. 492 A H.—1099 A C (*Vide J. R. A. S.*, ix, 361-64)

‡ Another important event of his reign was the appointment of a Ghaznawid officer, Husain bin Sām as governor of Ghūr—a fact which incidentally shows

laws and crystallized them into a consistent code. He proved himself a good administrator and enjoyed a peaceful reign of sixteen years, during a major part of which his Court resided at Lāhore.

Mas'ūd III died in 1115 A. C. and was succeeded by his son, Kamāl-ud-Sherzad and Arslan Shah. Daulah Sherzād† who had not yet completed the first anniversary of his reign when he was deposed and killed by his brother, Arslān Shāh Abul Mulūk‡ who

that the principality of Ghūr was still under the sway of the Ghaznawids

† *T F*, i, 49, *I K*, II, vii, 298-99 (Tr's note)

‡ Some historians have omitted the name of this king from the list of the Ghaznawid Sultāns. There is no justification for it. He is mentioned by Hamdullah Mastaufī (*T G*), Ferishta (*T F*, i, 49) and Khwāndmīr (*E & D*, i, 206). The chronological chain of the Ghaznawid kings loses one of its links if his name is excluded from it.

‡ In the original Persian text this word is written as "ابو ملوک". In *E & D*, (ii, 279) Sir Henry Elliot has converted it into 'Abdul Malik, in his translation of *T N* (p 107, note), Raverty has changed it into 'Abdul Mulūk, and in *C H I*, (Vol iii, p 35), Sir W Haig has written it as 'Abdul Malik. "ابو ملوک" is sheer nonsense. It must therefore be a miswriting of some other word. While trying to correct it, Raverty and Haig have made a fundamental mistake in converting *Abū* into 'Abd. *Abū* of the original text is quite correct. It is only "ملوک" that is wrong. Raverty's conjectural restoration of the word is wrong for the simple reason that no king would

also threw into prison all of his other brothers, except Bahrām Shāh who, when escaped, went to Sultān Sanjar and invoked his help* Sanjar was at that time in charge of Khurāsān as a viceroy of his brother, Muhammad Sultān *bin* Malak Shāh. When Arslān Shāh learnt of all this, he wrote a letter to Sultān Sanjar about Bahrām Shāh and tried to appease him, but failed to achieve his object. Sanjar took up the cause of Bahrām and proceeded against Ghaznīn. On hearing this, Arslān Shāh sent a messenger to Muhammad Sultān and requested him to dissuade his brother from prosecuting his plan. When this also led to nothing useful, Arslān Shāh sent his mother, the Saljūqian princess, with 200,000 *dīnārs* and other valuable presents to her brother, Sultān Sanjar, to pacify him. The

like to style himself 'Abdul Mulūk or "Servant of Kings". Sir W. Haig's conjecture lacks all authority and must be dismissed as beside the mark. Elliot's conjecture—that the word is 'Abul Malik' is a good shot, near the mark but not exactly in the bull's eye. Mirzā Muhammad Qazvīnī has it as 'Abul Mulūk' (*J R A S*, 1905, 720). Professor Hodivala also is in its favour (*S I-M H*, 198). It appears that the middle *م* of "ابو ملوک" has been left out by the scribe. *Abul Mulūk* or "Father of Kings" is therefore the most sensible restoration of Arslān's title.

* The exact date of Sultān Arslān's accession is given in no work, but it is preserved in a *qasida* of Mas'ūd-i-Sa'd-i-Salmān, for which see Mirzā Muhammad Qazvīnī in *J R A S*, (1905, p. 705), where it is given as the 6th of Shawwāl, 511 A. H., which corresponds to the 23rd February, 1116 A. C.

lady, who was so deeply incensed by the murders of her sons and the insult to which he had subjected her, poured forth the long-pent-up grievances before her brother and thus aggravated the crisis.⁴ Sultān Sanjar advanced with his forces and Arslān Shāh also came out to receive him in the battle-field. In the battle that was fought, Sanjar won a decisive victory and Arslān Shāh fled towards India. After a stay of 40 days in Ghaznīn, Sanjar went back, leaving Bahrām in possession of Ghaznīn. On hearing of his departure from Ghaznīn, Arslān Shāh raised an army in India and proceeded towards it. On his arrival Bahrām withdrew to the fort of Bāmān and remained there till he was restored to the throne by Sanjar. Arslān Shāh was arrested and made over to Bahrām Shāh who put him to death. Thus came to an end a most troubled reign of about three years. (1115—18 A C)†

⁴ Bahrām is said to have asked his step-mother, the Saljūqian princess, to dance before him and that is supposed to have drawn down upon him the wrath of her brother, Sultān Sanjar (*M I*).

† *K T*, v, 179, *T F*, i, 49-50; and *I K*, II, xii, 299-300 (Tr's note) The date of Arslān's death as given by Minhāj-us-Sirāj is 511 (*T N*) and as given by Ibn-ul-Asīr is 512 A H (*K T*, x 179) The difference is due to the fact that Minhāj-us-Sirāj has left out Sherzād, who followed Mas'ūd III and preceded Arslān and whose reign lasted for some months. Ibn-ul-Asīr's evidence is, therefore, to be preferred

Since Bahrām' owed his success to the support of the Saljūqs, the influence of **Bahram Shah** the latter in the governmental affairs of Ghaznīn was bound to increase by leaps and bounds. Nevertheless, the relations between them and the Sultān of Ghaznīn continued to be harmonious. But for the bitter hostilities of the Malīks of Ghūr, in which he was constantly involved and to which we shall presently revert, Bahrām's reign would have been glorious.

Soon after ascending the throne, Bahrām turned his attention towards the **Rebellion of Indian Governor.** Indian Province, which was then held by Bahlīm, an officer appointed by Arslān Shāh. He took an army against the said officer, defeated him and took him to Ghaznīn as a prisoner, but restored him to his previous dignity and sent him again to India some time later. In his absence the same officer conquered Nagaur (in Swālik), left his family there and then launched upon a career of conquests. Having collected a large army, he raided a number of places and possessed himself of immense wealth. The wealth thus amassed widened the horizon of his ambitions and he now aspired for the sovereignty of an independent kingdom. Bahrām again marched against him in person and in a battle that was fought the rebellious governor disappeared and was seen no more * After appointing Sālār Husain son of

* According to Minhāj-us-Sirāj (*T N in E & D*, II, 280), Bahlīm and his ten sons fell into a quagmire on the

Ibrāhīm 'Alwī as the *Sipah-Sālār* of the Indian Province and introducing other necessary changes, the Sultān returned to Ghaznīn.[†]

We may now revert to the struggle between the Ghaznawids and the Ghūrīds for political supremacy in Afghānistān. The Ghūrīds, it should be recalled, had fought faithfully under the banner of Sultān Mamūd and established their reputation as first-rate warriors. But when the sceptre passed into the hands of mere mediocres, they became lukewarm, even cold, in their allegiance to the Ghaznawid Sultān and treated him with scant courtesy.[†] The matters became more

War with Ghūrīd Malik
 day of the battle [See Dowson's note (*Ibid*) and *S I-M H*, 198-99] Dowson says that there are some unintelligible words in the original. The words in question are "در زمین پورنی افتاد" According to Richardson's Dictionary, "پورن" or "پورنی" means "a ditch, a marsh, a place where water stagnates" Professor Hodivala's suggestion that "the word "پورنی" (*recte* "پورنی" *Būrīnī*) is a conjectural or variant reading, which the copyist had found transcribed in the margin and inserted or transferred by error into the text" seems to be quite correct (*S I-M H*, 198-99) Ferishta substitutes the synonymous word "جمعہ" (*T F*, 1, 50), which confirms the conclusion of the learned Professor According to Ferishta (*Ibid*), two and not ten sons shared Bahlīm's fate He is followed by Sir W Haig (*C H. I*, III, 35)

[†] *T F*, 1, 50, *I K*, II, 300 (Tr's note)

[†] The Ghūrīds fully availed themselves of the struggle between the Ghaznawids and the Saljūqs and husbanded their resources for asserting their own supremacy.

serious when a Sūrī Prince, Qutb-ud-Dīn Muhammad of Ghūr, was put to death under the instructions of Bahrām.* To retaliate the murder of the deceased, his brother, Saif-ud-Dīn, attacked Ghaznīn, defeated Bahrām and drove him into India. After the conquest of Ghaznīn Saif-ud-Dīn sent his brother, 'Alā-ud-Dīn, to Ghūr and himself settled down in Ghaznīn along with his family. The sympathies of the people of Ghaznīn were, however, with Bahrām and they kept him in close touch with the affairs at the Imperial Capital.† Availing himself of the sympathies of the people and of the state of affairs at Ghaznīn, Bahrām marched out from Kirmān ‡ at the head of an army, defeated Saif-ud-Dīn in a pitched battle and took him prisoner. Saif-ud-Dīn was mounted on a lean old cow and paraded through the bazars of Ghaznīn and then tortured to death. When 'Alā-ud-Dīn heard of the fate of his brother, he vowed to fall upon the Sultān of Ghaznīn and advanced with the best of his forces. He defeated Bahrām in three successive battles and put him to flight. When defeated and disappointed, Bahrām fled towards

* Annoyed with his brother, Qutb-ud-Dīn Muhammad of Ghūr fled to Ghaznīn and found refuge with Bahrām, who also married one of his daughters to him. Later, he was suspected of treason and poisoned to death (*T F*, 1, 50)

† *T F*, 1, 50-51

‡ This was a town situated between Ghaznīn and India and should not be confused with its more famous namesake (*T F*, 1, 50)

India. There he raised a large force and again attacked Ghaznīn and occupied it. He, however, found his capital in quite a different condition, for after his victory 'Alā-ud-Dīn had given it to plunder for seven days, during which a number of its finest buildings and 'exquisite memorials of the greatness and splendour of Mahmūd' were destroyed and most of its inhabitants killed*. This act of 'Alā-ud-Dīn earned for him the title of *Jahānsoz* or 'World Burner'. Bahrām died sometime later.†

Bahrām was a most remarkable patron of letters and a great friend of the learned. Among many others, Sayyad Hasan Ghaznawī and Shaikh Nizāmī flourished at his Court and enjoyed his patronage. The latter dedicated his book entitled *Makhzan-i-Asrār* to the Imperial patron. Numerous foreign works were also translated into Persian under his instructions. Among the most important translated versions may be men-

* Even the tombs of the Ghaznawid princes, save those of Mahmūd, Mas'ūd I and Ibrāhīm were not spared. The remains of the princes were torn from their graves and burnt (*M I*)

† There are several discrepancies about the date of Bahrām's death. According to Ferishta (*T F*, 1, 52), he died in 1152 A C, i.e. before the burning of Ghaznīn by 'Alā-ud-Dīn *Jahānsoz*. If this account be accepted as correct, the pillage of Ghaznīn took place during the reign of Khusrau Shāh. I have followed Minhāj-us-Sirāj (*T N*), which is a much earlier work.

tioned the *Kalila wa Damna*, which was renamed *Anwār-i-Suhaili*, which is still so popular with the people of India and outside. The Sultān was also interested in the wide-spread diffusion of education. He opened a number of *maktabs* and *madrasahs* for the purpose, and as a natural result, education made mighty strides during his reign *

Khusrāu Shāh, the son and successor of Bahrām Shāh, was unfit to cope successfully with the onerous situation that confronted him at his accession. When, after the conquest of Khurāsān and the defeat of Sultān Sanjar,† the Ghuzz Turkomāns attacked Ghaznīn, he took to flight and found shelter in India, where he died at Lāhore in 1160 A. C.‡ Of the extensive empire of Sultān Mahmūd, the Punjab was all that remained in the hands of his descendants. Ghaznīn remained in possession of the Ghuzz Turkomāns for ten years and then it passed into the hands of the princes of Ghūr.

* T. F., i, 50.

† Sultān Sanjar died in the hands of the Ghuzz Turkomāns in 1157 A. C. (C. H. I., iii, 37)

‡ According to Ferishta, the pillage of Ghaznīn took place during his reign (T. F., i, 52). In view of the fact that there is a great confusion about the regnal dates of the Ghaznawid princes, it is very difficult to locate events in correct serial order.

Khusrau Shāh was succeeded by his son, Khusrau Malīk, who ruled for about 27 years, with his capital at Lāhore. He established his authority over all those places which formed part of the Indian Province under Sultān Ibrāhīm and Sultān Bahrām Shāh. No longer content with the conquest of Ghaznīn, Shahāb-ud-Dīn Muhammad Ghūrī, brother of Sultān Ghiyās-ud-Dīn of Ghūr, conquered Peshāwar, Afghānistān, Multān and Sindh and then contemplated the conquest of India. He repeatedly attacked India and compelled Khusrau Malīk to sue for peace and to offer his son as a hostage till the fulfilment of the terms of the peace-treaty. Later, Khusrau Malīk was taken prisoner by means of a ruse and killed in 1191 A. C. With him ended the House of Ghaznīn and then the sovereignty of Hindūstān, in addition to that of Ghaznīn and its dependencies, passed into the hands of the Ghūrīd Chiefs.

¹ Briefly stated, the ruse, as described by Ferishta, is as follows —

Mūiz-ud-Dīn (Shahāb-ud-Dīn Muhammad of Ghūr) informed Khusrau that he wished to cultivate friendly relations with him, and as a proof of his sincerity, he sent back the prince kept as a hostage, to his father with a very splendid escort. Khusrau advanced a part of the way to meet his son, when all of a sudden he was surrounded by the Ghūrīd forces at night. In the morning, when he woke up, he found himself a prisoner. Thus Mūiz-ud-Dīn entered Lāhore in triumphant procession without shedding a drop of blood. (*T F*, 1, 52)

CHAPTER X

THE GHAZNAWID GOVERNMENT

The Ghaznavids sprang into power and ruled over a vast empire for over two centuries. During this period some of them, particularly Mahmūd, made an enduring impress on the history of their times. In the preceding pages we have dealt with their military achievements and have also had occasional glimpses of their contributions to the arts of peace. Here it is proposed to deal with the administrative side of their rule, to refer to the progress of arts and sciences under their patronage and to sum up their achievements.

In the sphere of administration the Ghaznavids were guided by the precedents of the Khalīfas of Baghdād and the Sāmānīd rulers of Bukhārā. Far from theocracy, which was contemplated by the *Qur-ān* and put into practice by the Prophet of Islām, the Muslim Government had become an absolute monarchy.* The Sultān was a full-

* It may be pointed out here that the State had drifted afar from the high ideal set forth by the *Qur-ān*. It did, however, try to follow the laws of the *Sharīʿat* as long as they did not collide or come in conflict with those of its own. This was because most of the later Muslim kings were interested more in their own aggrandizement than in the glorification of Islām.

fledged autocrat with unlimited powers* He could nominate his own successor and do whatever he liked, subject, of course, to such limitations as were occasioned by fear of rebellions and revolts.† He was *Zullullah* or "the Shadow of God" on Earth and hence the highest executive, legislative, judicial and military authority, responsible to no earthly power for his actions. He exercised general supervision over the working of the administrative machinery, regulated foreign policy, dictated all important diplomatic correspondence and made all important appointments. He was the Commander-in-Chief of his army. He led almost all his expeditions in person or directed them from his capital. In serious situations he convened a council of high officials of the State and consulted them, but he was not bound by their decision. The council was thus a mere deliberative or consultative body.‡

The Ghaznawid Government undertook to
 Functions— protect the country from external invasions, to regulate foreign policy,

* For the powers and privileges of a Muslim king, see *T. M.*, 108-10, *T. Y.*, 5, and *S. N.*, 110. See also *S. C. A. M. R. I.*, 8-11.

† For the limitations of a Muslim king, see *J. R. A. S. B.* (1935), 1, 128-29, and *S. C. A. M. R. I.*, 11-15.

‡ *T. M.*, 266, *S. N.*, 84. *Nizāmī al-'Arūzī* compares a king with a child and says that the first and foremost condition of service under him is to speak according to his wishes (*C. M.*)

to maintain law and order, to suppress crime and to encourage public morality, to ensure the security of the life and property of the people, to administer justice and to enforce private contracts. In addition to these constituent functions, the Ghaznawid Government also performed such ministrant duties as fixing of coinage, maintenance and protection of roads and highways, construction of public works of utility, promotion of education, encouragement of arts and literature and administration of famine relief.*

Toleration is the *sine quo non* of the success and stability of a State and no ruler, however mighty, can afford to do without it if he aspires to perpetuate his rule. The Ghaznawid rulers fully understood and appreciated this point and followed a policy of universal toleration within their dominions. We have had occasions to refer to the religious policy of Sultān Mahmūd and his successors and shown that it was characterized by toleration in the widest sense of the word.† The *Zimmis* (non Muslims) enjoyed full freedom of worship and liberty of conscience. The destruction of temples outside the Ghaznawid Empire was not the result of religious zeal or fanaticism but of dire political necessity and need for money—for financing military schemes successfully. If the Ghaznawid Sultāns had aimed at the spread of

* *Vide ibidra.*

† See *supra*, pp 103-4, 202-3.

Islām at the point of the sword, as alleged by the critics, they would not have tolerated the existence of idols and temples in their capital*. The employment of Hindūs in highly responsible posts of the State without any restrictions of rank, race or religion amply brings out their broad-mindedness and testifies to their catholicity of mind. They consistently followed the policy of toleration in their kingdom and we do not come across a single instance when a *Zimmī* was subjected to inequitable treatment on account of his religion. The Hindūs formed an important part of the Ghaznawid armies and occupied such important posts as those of commanders. They also held high positions in the administrative system. They were taken into confidence and entrusted with responsible tasks.†

In the absence of a well-defined and recognized law, governing the succession to the throne, rival claims often come in conflict and the history of the Ghaznawids teems with instances to illustrate this rule. On his death Alptigin was succeeded by his son, Is-hāq, who was driven out but restored by the Sāmānid overlord. On his death the adherents of Alptigin elected one of their chiefs, called Bilkatigin, as their king. Piritigin (Piri), who followed him, was deposed in favour of Subuktigin, another chief, who was

Absence of
the Law of
Succession

* *Risālat-ul-Ghufrān*, by Al-Ma'arrī, p. 153.

† *II G*, 163-64, *CH I*, iii, 88-89, *HI*, 292-93, *PP II T*, 45-46

soon elected. Subuktigīn nominated his younger son, Ismā'īl, as his successor, but the claims of the nominee were successfully challenged by his elder brother, Mahmūd, not only on the score of seniority but also on the strength of the sword and the fitness to rule. Mahmūd nominated his younger son, Muhammad, as his successor, but the latter's claims were successfully contested by his elder brother, Mas'ūd who asserted his own rights on four grounds* Mas'ūd knew too well that neither his descent, nor the recognition of his title by the Khalīfa, nor even the support of religious classes—three grounds on which he based his right to succession—would be of any use without 'the ability to command and rule' which constituted the fourth ground. On Mas'ūd's death the succession became more confused and complicated. Five of his sons ascended the throne with one break, that of Tughral, and the sword became the sole arbiter in the final settlement of claims. But no outsider could ascend the throne as long as a member of Mahmūd's family was found. This is borne out by the case of Tughral who usurped sovereignty from 'Abdur Rashīd only on the ground of fitness to rule but lost it within a month and a half.† Tughral was fully conscious of the prestige of Mahmūd's family and he had therefore cleared his path by putting to death almost all the

* See *supra*, p. 184 f n. See also S. A M A, 7 ff, and M G, 24 ff, 169-70.

† See *supra*, pp 223-24.

descendants of Mahmūd.* It was therefore easy for an able and ambitious man to make a bid for the throne, but none dared come out. After a thorough search, two or three princes of Mahmūd's family were found alive and one of them was immediately enthroned. Two important inferences can be drawn from the above discussion: Unfitness to command and rule was a positive disqualification and nothing could override the ability to rule till the time of Subuktigīn. After Mahmūd, however, descent became an all-important claim which could not be over-ridden by any such qualifications as ability to rule or power of the sword. Mahmūd's prestige was responsible for keeping the crown reserved for his descendants and the struggle for succession was strictly confined to their family-circle. It was not, however, settled as to which of the sons or brothers of the late king had the best claim. One who possessed the purse and commanded the confidence of the people had, of course, the best chances to succeed. A minor's chances were few and far between, and hence with one solitary exception no minor occupied the throne of Ghaznīn †

The Ghaznawid system of administration was modelled on that of Baghdād and Bukhārā ‡ For purposes of effective control and efficient

The Central Government.

* See *supra*, p 223.

† See *supra*, p 221. See also S. A. M. A., 12-14

‡ Ghaznīn was formerly a dependency of Bukhārā.

administration the Ghaznawid Empire was divided into a number of provinces, each of which was placed in charge of a trusted officer. Every province was sub-divided into a number of smaller units corresponding to our modern districts. The Sultān was the highest authority, as already remarked, and he had under him a set of officers who held the portfolios of different departments of the State. The principal departments were (1) *Dīwān-i-Wisārat*, (2) *Dīwān-i-'Arz*, (3) *Dīwān-i-Risālat*, (4) *Dīwān-i-Sughl-i-Ishrāf-i-Mamlukat*, (5) *Dīwān-i-Wikālat*, (6) *Dīwān-i-Mazālim*, (7) *Dīwān-i-Muhtasib*, (8) *Dīwān-i-Auqāf*, (9) *Dīwān-i-Mumlikat-i-Khas* and (10) *Dīwān-i-Barīd*.^{*} A brief description of each of these departments and its functions is attempted in the following pages.

The *Dīwān-i-Wisārat* or the Finance Department was under the direct control of the *Wasir* who was the highest official of the State, holding a place second only to the throne. The *Wasir* was expected to be a most experienced and qualified man, possessing a fertile brain, a facile pen and

As such, it was governed as a part of the Sāmānid Empire according to the Sāmānid system of administration. When Sultān Mahmūd mounted the throne and threw off the Sāmānid yoke, he continued the same system of administration without introducing any appreciable changes. The same system was followed by his successors

^{*} Abū Bakr Muhammad bin Ja'far Narshakhī has given a list of some of these *Dīwāns* in his *Tārīkh-i-Bukhārā*, p 24. (Schefer's edition).

ability to handle serious situations successfully. He assisted the Sultān in the discharge of his duties and controlled the entire machinery of government. In the absence of the Sultān he acted as his deputy and supervised all the departments of the State. His was the court of first instance in matters relating to fiscal policy. He occupied a most uncertain position. He was a buffer between the Sultān and his subjects, exposed to the whims and caprices of the former and the hatred and jealousy of the latter.*

The *Diwān-i-'Arz* † or the Military Department was in charge of an officer called '*Arz*', who was next

* C M, T V, 181, 297, M G, 132 ff, S A V A, 161 ff.

Sultān Mahmūd introduced the institution of *Wazīrat* in the administrative system of Ghaznī and it gained immense power and prestige under his successors. The election by the elite of the officials of a panel from which the Sultān was to select one as his *Wazīr* was indeed a most useful contribution to the system of government that was then in vogue. The importance of the method of appointing *Wazīr*, as introduced by Mahmūd and followed by his successors, has not received the appreciation it deserves. No Muslim or Hindū ruler of India, nor even the Great Mughals, ever thought of adopting such a wise course of action. On the other hand, they would have regarded it as an encroachment on their prerogatives. It may be pointed out here that the *Wazīrs* of the Ghaznawids were men of extraordinary ability, experience and education. They enjoyed wide powers and were freely entrusted with the work of government in their absence necessitated by military expeditions.

† The '*Shughl-i-'Arz*' is wrongly translated by Elliot as

only to the *Wasir* in point of importance. The 'Ariz was the adviser of the Sultān in military matters. His principal peace-time duties were to maintain the army in a high state of efficiency and to look after the comfort and convenience of soldiers. He kept a regular muster-roll of all soldiers, showing losses due to illness, retirement or war*. During the travels and tours of the Sultān he had to see that the royal camp was properly supplied with provisions, water, fodder, etc†. In war times he acted as Quarter Master General of the army, provided all possible facilities to soldiers at halting stations, and after victory he supervised the collection of booty which was distributed in the presence of the Sultān. He had an assistant called *Nāib-'Ariz*, who helped him in the discharge of his duties‡.

While we are still about the *Diwān-i-'Ariz* a reference may appropriately be made to the army of the Ghaznawids and the military organization under them. The army consisted of infantry, cavalry, the royal

* 'the business of reporting matters' (*E & D*, II, 73)

* A copy of the muster-roll was kept in the office of the *Diwān-i-Risālat* for ready reference (*T M*, 332)

† Traders frequently accompanied the armies and catered for the soldiers just as *Banyās* do the Indian armies in these days (See *S N.*, 91)

‡ *T. M*, 100, 329-30, 332, 532, 625, and *M G*, 137-38

body-guard ^ and elephants † In the absence of statistics it is not possible to give the exact strength of the Ghaznawid army. At one time it was fifty-four thousand strong "besides garrisons at the outposts of the Empire" Dr M. Nāzīm has roughly estimated the number at 100 thousand, ‡ but in times of war it must have been swelled enormously by volunteers called *Ghāzīs* or 'holy warriors' and the contingents furnished by provincial governments. The Ghaznawid army was mainly recruited from Transoxiana, but it also included Arabs, Afghāns, Dailamites, Khurāsānids, Ghūrids and Indians. The presence of soldiers of various nationalities served as an effective safeguard against the possibility of a combination against the Sultān and also fostered a spirit of emulation among them. § Highly organized in the times of Sultān Mahmūd, the Ghaznawid army deterior-

^ The body-guard of the Sultān consisted principally of slaves who were more dependable than all others because they depended wholly on the Sultān. They had their separate commanders and administrative officers. They were under the direct supervision of the Sultān. Their banner bore the distinctive device of 'a lion and spears' (T M, 329, 488)

† Almost all the elephants had been captured in Indian wars or received in tribute from Indian Princes. Their drivers were mostly Hindūs and their commander was called *Muqaddam-i-Pilbānān*. Baihaqī mentions the price of an elephant as 100,000 *dirhams*. (T M, 29, 488, 70.)

‡ M. G, 140 See also T. II, 846

§ S N, 92, and *Qābūs Nāma*, 176

rated a great deal and became demoralized under Mas'ūd and his successors.

The Commander of the troops of Khurāsān was the highest military authority, second to the Sultān. Every province had its own *Sipah Salar* or Commander of local troops and an *'Ariz* whose duties were similar to those of his prototype of the Central Government. Each Provincial Commander had under him a number of *Hajibs*, each commanding a *Jaish* or an army. Below the rank of *Hajib* was that of *Sarhang*, who was the commander of 500 horse. The officer next in rank to him was called *Qaid* who commanded a *Khail*, consisting of 100 horse. The lowest rank in the army was that of the *Khail-tash* who was probably a commander of 10 horse.* All soldiers were expected to make their own commissariat arrangements. Each army was provided with a separate armoury and a magazine, and arms were supplied to soldiers just before the battle†

The portfolio of the *Diwān-i-Risālat* or the Correspondence Department was held by an officer of high literary attainments, experience, ability and

* No contemporary chronicler has given a list of the grades enumerated above. They have been taken from different accounts and are based on casual references (*M G*, 141)†

† *T. M.*, 6, 132, 145, 325, 328-30, 332, 421, 423, 616,

tact * The duties of the *Sāhib-i-Dīwān-i-Risālat* or the Head of the Correspondence Department were multifarious. He wrote the letters of the Sultān to the Khalīfa of Baghdād, to foreign powers, to provincial governors and other high officials of the State. Important diplomatic correspondence was dictated by the Sultān himself and the *Sāhib-i-Dīwān-i-Risālat* deciphered the reports received from the *Mushrif*s and the *Sāhib-i-Barīds* and submitted them to the Sultān † He had under him a large staff of officers, called *Dabīrs* who were paid handsome salaries. Service was graded and vacancies were filled strictly on the basis of seniority and efficiency. The office hours were from about 9 a. m. to about 3 p. m. Tuesday and Friday were observed as holidays, when one clerk was put on duty to deal with important correspondence and expedite the dispatch of urgent letters. A clerk from this department always remained in attendance on the Sultān during his journeys and travels. ‡.

629, 808, 818,, *K T*, iv, 241, and *M G*, 241-42

* He was expected to be a man of mature age and ripe experience. Abul Fazl Bahāqī was regarded as too young to fill that post at the age of 45 (*T M*, 753)

† "Before proceeding to his post, every important officer was supplied with a code of language by the *Sāhib-i-Dīwān-i-Risālat* or the Head of the Correspondence Department." (*T M*, 541, 821)

‡ *T M*, 164, 181, 191, 297, 581

The *Diwān-i-Shughl-i-Ishrāf-i-Mamlukat* * or the Secret Intelligence Department was in charge of a separate officer who had under him a number of officers called *Mushrif*s, who were posted in different parts of the Empire and whose duty was to watch the movements of Government officials all over the Empire and to submit secret information about their doings to the *Sahib-i-Shughl-i-Ishrāf-i-Mamlukat* or the Head of the Correspondence Department. The most trusted and confidential servants and slaves of important officers and princes were employed by this department to spy the acts and actions of their masters.† The *Mushrifān-i-Dargāh* or the *Mushrif*s attached to the Court of the Sultān watched the movements of ministers, courtiers

* The translation of the term '*Shughl-i-Ishrāf-i-Mamlukat*' in *E & D*, II, 74 is "the duty of controlling the financial affairs" and the term '*Mushrif*' is translated as "an accountant". The dictionary meaning of the word '*Ishrāf*' is observation from an eminence. The department (*Diwān-i-Ishrāf-i-Mamlukat*) was so called because its business was to keep a sharp watch on the conduct of all important persons and foreign princes. While referring to the Ghaznawid system of secret intelligence or espionage in connection with the arrest and imprisonment of Ariyāraq (Indian Governor), Baihaqī uses the terms *حاسبان و مشرفان* as synonymous expressions (*Vide T M.*, 154, 328). Dr R. P. Tripathi has followed Dowson and repeated the error. (*S A M A.*, 211)

† According to Baihaqī, the spies of Sultān Mahmūd were so expert that they counted the very breaths of the Khāns of Turkistān (*T M.*, 846).

and princes and kept the Head of the Department informed of their activities. Princes had their own spies among the confidential servants of the Sultān and they kept them in close contact with the Court of their father. Thus it was that they outwitted their father in many cases. The importance of the officers of this department cannot be exaggerated. They could make and mar careers by submitting favourable and adverse reports. They were therefore appointed by the Sultān himself in consultation with the Head of the Department and paid lucrative salaries so that they might not yield to the temptations of money, etc.†

The *Sahib-i-Diwan-i-Wikalat* was what may be called in modern terminology the Comptroller of the Household. The contemporary chroniclers throw very little light on this department and its officers. This is obviously because the nature of the duties of the *Sahib-i-Diwan-i-Wikalat* and his subordinates did not bring them in contact with the King, the Court and the Courtiers. The Head of the Department was sometimes called *Wakil*. His principal duties were to supervise the Royal Kitchen, the Royal Stables and the

† According to Nizām-ul-Mulk, the principal qualifications of *Mushrif* were honesty and sound judgment (S A, 57)

† T T II, 135-38, 164-65, 331, 493, 522, 609, 812, S A, 57, 68, and M G, 144-45

personnel attached to the Royal Palace. He was in charge of the personal treasury of the Sultān and it was also his duty to distribute rations and to disburse pay among the personal servants of the Sultān.*

The *Dīwān-i-Mazālīm*† was what may now be called a Tribunal of Justice. The —, *Mazālīm*. Sultān himself was a fountain of justice and his was the highest court of appeal. He held his court daily and dealt out justice and redressed the wrongs done to the oppressed ‡ He delegated his powers to Pro-

* It was essential for the Head of this department to possess unimpeachable character and integrity

† This department was so called because it dealt with the subject of *مظالم* or oppression and sought to redress the wrongs done to the oppressed

‡ Referring to the court of justice held by Sultān Mas'ūd, Baihaqī says, "امیر مظالم کرد و روزی در آن دادگاه بود" (The Amīr dealt with oppression, & c held a court of justice, and heard the complaints of the oppressed persons, and it was a most eventful day) In *E & D* the extract is translated as "The Amīr was very severe and the day passed in great pomp and splendour." (*E & D*, II, 73). Dowson has translated the extract without reference to the text and hence made a mess of the whole thing. In the preceding page Baihaqī has said that the *Wasir* has ordered all *مظلومان* (oppressed persons or complainants) to be called (*T. M.*, 181) *مظالم* is also referred to as a court of justice. Gardīzī says that soon after his accession Mas'ūd sat in (held) a court of justice (*در مظالم نشست*), heard their complaints and dealt out justice (*Z. A.*, 95). Speaking of Sultān Ibrāhīm of Ghaznī also, he uses

vincial Governors who appointed *Qāzīs* (judges or magistrates) to assist them in their work by their knowledge of the *Shariyat*.¹ Each town had a *Qāzī* and each province a *Qāzī-ul-Quzzāt* or *Qāzī-in-Chief*, corresponding to a modern Chief Justice of a High Court. The *Qāzīs* were paid handsome salaries and they were not removed from service except for misconduct. They were recruited mainly from the class of the *Ulamā* (theologians) having a thorough knowledge of Muslim law and practice. The procedure of their courts was very simple. They themselves were the judges of fact as well as of law. After taking the evidence of the parties and of their respective witnesses, they formulated their judgment and pronounced it after considering the *pros* and *cons* of the case.[†] The sentences passed by them were executed by local governors and disobedience to their summonses was severely

similar words سعى مظالم شنید و داد داد - (listened to the complaints of the oppressed and dispensed justice *Ibid*, 468) Minhāj-us-Sirāj uses the word "مظالم" for "redress of grievances" (*T N*, 275), and *Diwān-i-Mazālīm* for Court of Justice (*Ibid*, 3).

* Justice was administered on almost similar lines all over the Muslim world. The Khalīfa (successor of the Prophet) was the fountain of justice and he was supposed to have delegated judicial powers to rulers of different states.

† In addition to their duties as judges, the *Qāzīs* also acted as trustees of the property of orphans and of those who went abroad on travels etc. (*S. N*, 77-78)

punished* The system of administering justice was quite sound and simple, being based on the laws of the *Shariyat*. On the whole, it worked well and was free from such formalities as a litigant in modern times has to observe. Punishments meted out to offenders were severe, but they acted as effective deterrents and were quite suited to those stormy times.

The *Diwān-i-Muhtasib* was concerned with the morals and manners of the —, *Muhtasib*. people. The religious beliefs of Muslim subjects of the Sultān were also ascertained by this department and those found guilty of 'heresy' and moral delinquency were punished. The adherents of the 'Bātinī' and 'Carmathian' creeds were rigorously persecuted everywhere in the Empire during the reign of Sultān Mahmūd. "they were captured, imprisoned and, if they did not recant, were sometime brutally murdered and burnt" and their literature was ruthlessly destroyed.†

The *Diwān-i-Auqāf* was in charge of a separate officer who supervised social —, *Auqāf*. activities of the people and managed religious endowments and such institutions as *maktabs* and *madrāsahs*, mosques and monasteries.‡

* S N., 38, 40, 54, 65, 77, T M, 40, 181, 246

† T. M., 664, K. T., ix, 264, M G, 160

‡ T. M., 308

The *Diwān-i-Mumlikat-i-Khās* was another department of the State. As to the rôle of this department and the duties of its head, the contemporary accounts afford little clue. From the designation of the officer in charge of this department (*Sāhib-i-Diwān-i-Mumlikat-i-Khās*) it appears that he was entrusted with the management of Crown-lands or royal domain, corresponding to the *Diwān-i-Khālsa* of the Mughal Period.[†]

Every province had its own *Sāhib-i-Barīd*[†] or Post Master General. He was the official news-writer and it was his duty to keep the Sultān informed of all that took place in the province where he was posted. He submitted reports in a cipher previously arranged with the *Sāhib-i-Diwān-i-Risālat*. Reports were conveyed through the agency of *Askudārs* or mounted couriers. Important communications were sent through special messengers. The system worked well, but at times it was set at naught by the refractory governors who prevailed upon the *Sāhib-i-Barīds* either by

[†] See S A M A , 211-12

[†] At first the word 'Barīd' was used for the post-mule, then for the courier who rode the post-mule and finally for the distance between two postal stations. The word is perhaps derived from the Persian word *برید* or 'cut' which was applied to the mules that had their tails cut or docked. (See S I M H , 153)

bribes or by force to send favourable reports about them to the Central Government. Often the couriers were waylaid, searched and dispossessed of the implicating papers. The *Sahib-i-Barid* therefore sent his couriers in the guise of merchants, mendicants and travellers, who carried official papers in the handles of implements kept hollow for the purpose or in the soles of their shoes, etc *

There was yet another officer called *Khāsan* (treasurer). He was in charge of the Government Treasury. He is only rarely referred to in the contemporary chronicles, where too he does not find place among the high officials of the State. It may therefore be inferred that he did not enjoy a very high status or rank †

The Provincial Government was based on the model of the Central Government and had three distinct branches of administration, *viz.* civil, judicial and military. The highest civil officer in a province was called *Sahib-i-Diwan*. He was entrusted with the collection of the revenue due to the State and was directly responsible to the *Wasir*. He had under him a staff of subordinate officers such as 'Amils who collected the revenue from

* T. M., 27, 139, 165-66, 425, 493-94, 522-23, 541, 627, 821, S. N., 57-58, 65, 68.

† S. A. M. A., 212.

the sub-division in their charge.* The chief military officer was the *Sipāh Sālār* or the commander of the provincial army. The *Sāhib-i-Diwan* and the *Sipāh Sālār* worked independently of each other, but in some cases when it was considered desirable they worked together and co-operated with each other. The highest judicial officer of a province was the *Qāzī-ul-Quzzāt*, who, in addition to his duties as a judge, supervised the judiciary of the province where he was stationed, and saw that the *Qāzīs* under him discharged their duties honestly and efficiently.†

How towns were administered is a question that confronts us now. Unfortunately, information on this subject is scanty and that too lies scattered over numerous accounts. Every town had a fort to protect it from an external attack. The commander of the fort was called *Kotwāl*. He was the highest military officer of the locality. The principal civil officer of a town was *Muhtasib*‡ who had a number of duties to perform. He had to see that law was respected and peace was not disturbed, that food-stuffs were not adulterated and weights and measures were not tampered with, that trade was

* The revenue system has been dealt with separately *Vide infra*, pp 260 ff

† S N, 18, 77-78, 149-50, T M, 246, 327, 352, 447, 488, 496, 559

‡ His other designation was *Shihna* (M G, 150).

protected and artisans were not molested, and that the Muslim code of morality was faithfully followed by the Muslim population. Offenders were arrested and sent to the *Amir-i-Haras* (Chief Jailor) who kept them in the lock up till they were summoned to stand their trial in the court of the *Qazi*. Each town had a paid *Khatib* who acted as *Pesh-Imam** and read the *Khutba* in the name of the Sultan. Municipal administration, as we understand it, was not known, but there is ample evidence on record to show that the notables of towns were consulted in all matters of importance relating to towns. The religious and educational endowments were administered by a separate office called *Ishraf-i-Auqaf* and the *Sahib-i-Ishraf-i-Auqaf* looked to the collection of the income derived from and the expenditure entailed by the endowments †

Government Service of any class. It was open to all who possessed the requisite qualifications. A man who entered service as an ordinary clerk could rise to the rank of *Wasir* in course of time if he possessed the required qualifications for that post.‡ Every

* One who leads the congregational prayers among Musalmāns is called *Imām* or *Pesh-Imām*.

† *T M*, 4, 5, 8, 19, 189, 197, 271, 288, 308, 664, 538, *S. N*, 41, 121, *T Y*, 332

‡ *T M*, 166 The administrative machinery was mainly in the hands of the Persians. Most of the *Wasirs*

important appointment in the State was a matter of contract. Before taking charge of his office every high official had to enter into a *Mawaza'* or covenant or contract with his royal master. The terms and conditions of the covenant differed with different posts in proportion to their importance. An *'Ariz* was, for instance, required to leave his son as a hostage before he was invested with the insignia of his office and sent out.

The Indian territories conquered by the early Ghaznawid princes, were formed into a separate province, which was administered by two officials—*Sipāh Sālār* and *Qāzī*. In the days of Mahmūd, the *Sipāh Sālār* was 'Abdullah Qaratigīn who resided at Lāhore. 'Abdullah was a mild man and the administrative machinery was therefore controlled by the *Qāzī*. But his successor, Ariyārāq, was a strong man who could not brook the interference of the *Qāzī* in his affairs and would not like to play the second fiddle. The clash between the two was, therefore, inevitable. The *Qāzī* Shīrāzī, 'Abdul Hasan Alī, who knew the *Sipāh Sālār* too well, moved the Government of Ghaznīn and secured the appointment of two more officials, *viz*, an *'Amīl* and a *Mushrif*. When

and departmental heads of the Ghaznawid Government were Persians. This is because they were superior to all others in diligence and obsequiousness (M. G., 131).

* T M, 177-78, 326, 416, 453, 504

even the appointment of these two officials did not exercise any check on the powers of Arīyāraq, the Qāzī mobilized the forces of intrigue against him and brought about his fall. He was successful in his object because the Sultān (Mas'ūd) was trying to get rid of the old and arrogant officials of his father's time.* When Niyāltigin was appointed *Sipah Salar* of India, the *Wasir* of Mas'ūd instructed him not to meddle with financial affairs but to leave them to the Qāzī. Thus, while the entire financial administration was placed in the hands of the Qāzī, the *Salar* could not but force the Thākurs to pay tribute, to wage wars and to administer military affairs. The idea was the separation of civil from military affairs. The *'Amil* and the *Mushrif* assisted the Qāzī. The clash between the Qāzī and the *Salar* as well as the rebellion of the latter were responsible for the changes introduced by Mas'ūd. He appointed his own son, Majdūd, as *Amir-i-Hind* (Governor of India) and put a *Dabir* and a *Mastauji* (accountant) at his disposal for help.† The *Mastauji* was expected to control the income and expenditure. At the time of Mas'ūd there were the following officers at Lāhore. a

* T M, 327-28, S. A. M. A, 213.

† The original idea of keeping the military department strictly separate from the civil must have been much modified by the appointment of Prince Majdūd who represented his father, the Sultān, and was thus the head of the Indian Government.

Sipah-Sālār, who was a prince of the royal family, a *Mastauḡī*, a *Mushrif* and a *Dabīr*. There might have been a treasurer as well, though we do not find any mention about him in the contemporary records. This was then the nucleus round which the *Wizārat* Department developed in India. Further changes in the administration of India must have been introduced when the Ghaznawids transferred their seat of government from Ghaznīn to Lāhore.

The Finance Department of the Central Government has been referred to above † The appointment as well as the dismissal of such local financial officers as the *Sāhib-i-Dīwān* or provincial revenue minister, *Mastauḡī-i-Mumālīk* (Accountant General) the '*Amīl* (or Collector) and the *Rāīs*, ‡ rested with the Central Government concentrated in the Sultān. The Central Revenue Department maintained a regular record of accounts of the *Māl-i-Kharāj* (revenue) sent to it from different provinces. The principles according to which the revenue of various places was assessed are not known, but it will not be far from the truth to say that the Ghaznawid Government relied on the records, whatever they were, of the rulers whom they supplanted. The contemporary

• T. M., 327-28, 622, 666-67, S. A. M. A., 213-14

† See *supra*, pp. 243-44

‡ He was perhaps a local revenue officer (supervisor?) of a district or town

works do not afford any clue to the actual measurement of land. The assessments recorded in the Central Financial Department furnished the basis of the demand of the *Wasir* for revenue from provincial and district revenue officers. The revenue due to the State was the first charge on the property of every person concerned with its collection. It was paid both in cash and kind. It was also paid in amber, pearls, cloth, utensils, etc. The *Wasir*, who was at the helm of all administrative affairs, was particularly keen on the realization of the amount of revenue recorded in his office as due from a place or a provincial officer.* There is no doubt that most of the defaulters were really incapable and dishonest and the *Wasir's* strictness was not misplaced, but it is quite reasonable to suppose that there must have been cases when the revenue due to the State could not be paid and thus even a good governor also ran the risk of suffering for no fault of his.† The revenue was realized with

* In a *qasida* in praise of Hasanak, Farrukhī says, "Tomorrow when he (the *Wasir*) demands an account from the Sultān's 'Amils their extortions will become manifest. The money which they have embezzled he will recover from them to the last *dāng*, and will send them to prison" (Quoted in *M G*, 133, f n 4). The defaulting officers were severely punished and nothing was spared to recover the State dues from them. But for this it would not have been possible to inspire awe and fear among the dishonest officers of distant provinces in those times. This is the only justification for the use of force.

† *T. M.*; 44-49; *S. A. M. A.*, 241-42.

great vigour, but neither the Sultān nor his *Wazīr* was slack to show leniency when he was convinced of the defaulter's inability to pay. There are also instances of successful protests and representations to the Central Government against unjust and unreasonable demands. Remissions were not grudged when there were good grounds for granting them. Whenever there was a drought or whenever a province suffered from the attack of an enemy, land revenue was remitted and loans were advanced to cultivators in order to enable them to purchase seeds, cattle and implements.¹

Other sources of revenue were such taxes as *Taxes and other sources of revenue* *Kharāj*, *Jizīa* and *Zakāt*, levied according to the laws of the *Sharīyat*, tributes from dependencies and presents from subordinate Princes, the produce of gold and silver from mines and the duties of the great volume of trade that passed between China, Turkistān and India and Khurāsān, Irāq and Syria, supplemented by the spoils of wars, enormously enriched the State Treasury.[†] There are repeated references to *Kharāj*[‡] in the contemporary accounts, which shows that it was a most important source of State income. *Jizīa*[§] was imposed on the

¹ T M, 144-46, 663, T. Y, 247, 271, 321, S N 18, 206, C M

[†] S N, 20, M. G, 133-34

[‡] See S A M A, 242

[§] For a discussion on *Jizīa*, see S C A M R I

Zimmis in lieu of military service and for the protection of their person and property; and a record of the income received from this source was kept in the Revenue Office. *Zakat** does not figure so prominently in the contemporary chronicles, but it must have been levied in some form or the other. It was $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ tax on property. The revenue due from each province was sent to the Head Quarters by the officer concerned, and in cases of delay and default a *Rasul* (agent) was sent by the Central Government with instructions to expedite remittance. At times the *Wasir* himself went to the defaulting province to see into its revenue affairs and to set them right. All amounts were sent to the Treasury, where the *Khāsan* (treasurer) examined the *Nuskha-i-Hujjat* (demands) and gave a *Khat* (receipt) on receiving the amount.†

The State also undertook to mitigate the horrors of famines whenever they broke out. It sympathized with the famine-stricken and the impoverished and did all that it could to relieve them of their sufferings. Once, when a terrible famine broke out in Khurāsān, Sultān Mahmūd issued orders to all Provincial Governors to send as much corn to the famine-stricken area as possible. Accordingly, huge quantities of food-stuffs began to pour into Khurāsān from all over the

* S N, 20; M G, 133

† T. M, 170, 314; S. A. M. A., 240 ff.

Ghaznawid Empire. With all the solicitude of the State for the comfort and convenience of the people, it must be remembered that modern means and methods of fighting famines were unknown in those times and the crude and unscientific means of communication and transportation must have formed a great obstacle in the proper administration of famine relief.

With rare exceptions, the Ghaznawid Sultans were deeply interested in the progress of learning and literature, architecture and other fine arts. Cultural progress
The University of Ghaznīn, with a vast library and a museum attached to it, was literally a light-house of learning, shedding its light far and wide and illuminating the East in general and Afghānistān in particular.† The *Arns-i-Falak* or 'the Celestial Bride', the loveliest house of prayer which had received the honorific appellation of 'the wonder of the east' in those days, was the finest gem of Islāmic architecture then in existence. Both these and many other magnificent monuments that adorned Ghaznīn things of beauty, which if spared and preserved would have been a joy for ever.

^ T. Y., 247 (Tehrān edition, p 331), S. A. M

† The Ghaznawids systematically encouraged education by opening schools and colleges and extending patronage to learned persons at a time when no government of the West had yet evolved a regular system of education (See E M I).

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